Daily Report

Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-055
Wednesday
20 March 1996

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Russia: Dudayev Gives 'Go-Ahead' To Use 'Any Forms of Warfare'

LD1903155796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SOUTHERN CHECHNYA, March 19 (Interfax) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev made clear late on Monday he had given his forces the go-ahead to use any forms of warfare, even those banned by international law, an Interfax correspondent reported from Chechnya.

"I will bear no responsibility for what means of warfare are used, even if they go beyond the bounds of international conventions," Dudayev said in a television program shown on a so-called "presidential channel," broadcast to the east and south of the North Caucasus republic.

He warned that the separatists might spread the war to Russian territory, where they would use all kinds of weapons, "including chemical and bacteriological ones."

He also declared the first three days of this week days of mourning for "civilians killed in the course of the operations of federal troops in villages in western Chechnya."

Russia: Federal Forces Resume Operations Against Chechen Separatists

LD2003100396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0918 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Federal troops on Wednesday morning resumed their operation aiming to eliminate separatist groups in the village of Samashki, the commander of the combined federal forces in Chechnya, Lieutenant-General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, told Itar-Tass by telephone today.

According to the commander, 2,000 peaceful civilians left Samashki along the safe corridor opened by the military on Tuesday. Sixteen separatist militants who tried to leave Samashki in civilian clothes were identified and detained at checkpoints.

General Tikhomirov noted that the federal troops were using artillery and tank guns to pound the enemy's gun emplacements as the separatists manoeuvered in the village returning the fire.

According to preliminary data confirmed by the civilians fleeing Samashki, 170 separatists have been killed. The commander said some 150 militants were still resisting the federal troops who did not lose a single man in the past 24 hours.

Also today, the federal forces continued their operation aimed at wiping out a major separatist base in Bamut. General Tikhomirov said the resistance to federal troops in the region was weakening.

The federal troops block the residential centres of Staryy Achkhoy and Orekhovo where they keep the illegally armed formations under continuous fire. The federal force commander said all the other villages of the Achkhoy-Martan district had expressed readiness to join the peace accord. He said the district administration and elders met representatives of the federal command at 10.00 on Wednesday to agree on the procedure of signing a memorandum.

General Tikhomirov stressed that "neither the government of Chechnya nor the Republic's Interior Ministry and the military prosecutor's office have received official statements about the alleged 'outrage of looting' by Russian troops."

The commander stressed that "any complaints by peaceful civilians, should such be filed, will be considered without delay by the military prosecutor's office and, where confirmed, the guilty party will be exemplarily punished in strict compliance with law."

Russia: Over 600 Civilians Reportedly Killed in Samashki

AU2003131196 Paris AFP in English 1259 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, Russia, March 20 (AFP) — More than 600 civilians were killed in fighting and shelling in the village of Samashki over the past few days, members of a delegation of elders who arrived here from the area said.

The report could not be independently confirmed.

Russia: Russian Troops Reportedly Fire on Chechen Civilians

LD2003115996 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0900 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Andrey Mironov, member of the Memorial Justice Group, told our radio station from the scene of events in Samashki that what is involved here is not the shelling of fighters.

[Mironov] On 19 March, a group of 74 Chechen mothers went to Samashki to take their children, including babies, out of the village. They had an agreement with the military that they would be given a corridor so that they could return home (?in the evening). However in early afternoon, as they were on their way back, holding a white flag and 150 meters away from the checkpoint

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N13 between Sernovodsk and Samashki, a Russian armored vehicle opened fire on them from an automatic grenade launcher; 10 women were wounded and the whole group had to start going back. A large-caliber artillery shell was then sent to chase them out of the area, which fortunately exploded some distance away, without injuring anybody. Eight people with injuries of various degrees were taken to hospital in an Ingush village. Two lightly injured women are also there, in the refugee camp.

Russia: Chechnya: No Charges Filed on Troops' Violating Human Rights

LD1903201696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1831 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, March 19 (Interfax) — Chechnya's Moscow-backed government has not made any official accusations of human rights violations by Russian troops, despite vocal assertions of troop misbehavior, Sergey Pichugin, first deputy Groznyy military prosecutor said after a meeting with Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Vakha Sagayev.

Pichugin said that at a meeting of the government Wednesday [20 March], he will propose that the government either take federal troops to court, or else withhold from making verbal accusations in their direction.

Military courts have heard six criminal cases this year, all of them of soldiers charged with stealing from the local population, the military prosecutor's office told Interfax.

Meanwhile, Chechnya's Deputy Interior Minister Yuriy Plugin told Interfax Tuesday that "some federal troops have gone too far" in their actions.

The Chechen Interior Ministry receives many reports from the population of "unfair" shootings by federal troops, instances of illegal detainment, and stealing, he said. The number of official reports to this effect, however, are very few, Plugin said. The Interior Ministry has asked the population to inform the proper authorities of federal troop "wrongdoing."

Aside from several isolated incidents between Russian troops and Chechen police, Plugin said there was no confrontation between them. Problems arising are solved jointly by federal troop commanders and the republic's leaders, he said.

Russia: Defense Ministry Denies Dudayev Has Nuclear, Chemical Arms

LD1803135696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1311 GMT 18 Mar 96

[By Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 18 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian Defence Ministry categorically denied reported claims of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev that he has nuclear and chemical arms in his possession and qualified the statements as "attempts to intimidate the world public".

"Such statements absolutely do not correspond to reality", a high-ranking official told Tass on Monday commenting on Dudayev's claims published in the British Independent newspaper.

He said a strategic missile base was situated in the settlement of Bamut in Soviet times, but all the silos were demolished by explosion according to the Start-1 treaty, while the warheads had been withdrawn and utilised.

As far as the chemical weapons are concerned, they have never been deployed in Chechnya, according to General Stanislav Petrov, the commander of the radioactive, chemical and biological defence troops.

"All the threats of Dudayev to make a whole continent kneel in several hours are groundless", he told Tass on Monday.

Petrov noted that such intimidations are spread by the separatists every time when they suffer defeats and lose support of the local population.

Russia: Medvedev: Program To Settle Chechen Conflict Launched

LD1903162396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — The program adopted by the Security Council for Chechen settlement is starting to be put into action, presidential press secretary Sergey Medvedev said at a briefing in the Kremlin on Tuesday.

"The transitional period in carrying out the program to settle the conflict in Chechnya, which was approved by the Russian Security Council, has begun," he said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin will personally inform the people of Russia of this program, he said.

"The financial scheme for Chechnya is currently being discussed. The redeployment of federal army troops and the reinforcement of interior troops both in Chechnya

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and in Dagestan are also under consideration," said Medvedev.

Russia: Medvedev on Need To Protect Details of Chechen Settlement

LD1903125296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1155 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Mar (ITAR-TASS) — Following the adoption at the last session of the Security Council of a program for settling the Chechen crisis, there is a period of transition on the path toward implementing this program. This was said today by Sergey Medvedev, the Russian president's press secretary, at a briefing for journalists in Moscow.

He said that the president intends to personally inform the people about the basic directions of implementing this program. At the same time the press secretary stressed that "the situation is a complex one and all the details of this program will not be made known because it would not be advisable for those who wish to prevent implementation of this plan to be aware of them."

According to Sergey Medvedev, the procedures for financing the program are now being agreed. He noted that it is proposed to regulate this process. Moreover, the president's press secretary said, the timetable for the redeployment of troops sent into Chechnya is being verified and the internal affairs bodies of Chechnya and neighboring Dagestan are being reinforced.

Russia: Zyuganov Proposes Ideas for Resolving Chechen Crisis

LD1903181596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — Communist Party of Russia leader Gennadiy Zyuganov believes that the Chechen problem can not be resolved by force.

Gennadiy Zyuganov, who has been nominated for Russian president by a number of leftist and opposition groups including his own Communist Party of Russia, made such a statement at a briefing in Moscow Tuesday when unveiling his plan to settle the crisis in Chechnya.

Zyuganov said he was in favor of introducing "inevitable changes" to the constitution in order to rule out the appearance of situations in which a decision to begin war is made by "one person" rather than by the Federation Council (parliament's upper chamber) "as the Fundamental Law requires."

Zyuganov proposed as a first move to resolve the Chechen crisis that a state commission be created including representatives of Russia's president, government and parliament. Such a commission should be led by a first deputy prime minister who would be vested with powers to hold talks, Zyuganov said.

Zyuganov also proposed that the authorities' effort to settle the Chechen crisis be backed by the holding of a peace conference between the North Caucasian elders, representatives of local clans and public of the entire North Caucasus. Such a conference should take place in the Pyatigorsk town in Russia's Stavropol region, he said.

Zyuganov said he deemed it reasonable to disburse federal funds only to those Chechen areas where "life is normal," adding that "the toughest suppression measures" must be applied to Chechen separatist fighters.

Russia: Chechen Village Signs Peace Agreement With Government

LD1903175796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1722 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Aleksandr Kharchenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — Residents of the Chechen village of Pobedenskoye, 20 kilometres (14 miles) of the Chechen capital, on Tuesday decided to sign a peace agreement with the Moscow-backed government of the republic and federal troops, governmental spokesman Ruslan Martagov told Itar-Tass.

Martagov said that although the criminal situation is rather tense there, the villagers pledged not to let separatist fighters to their territory and maintain law and order under the government's regulations.

Under the agreement, Groznyy promises "full support" to Pobedenskoye while federal troops pledge to see to its security.

Russia: Duma Delegation Discusses Visit to Chechnya

LD1903182296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1747 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — A State Duma delegation on Tuesday held a conference to recount its recent fact-finding tour to southern Chechnya.

Delegation members Valeriy Borshchov, Viktor Kurochkin and Yuliy Rybakov in their speeches

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accused federal troops, saying that they launched "large-scale operations against rebels" in the second half of February. However, they said, the operations caused "casualties of tens of people killed and hundreds wounded."

According to the parliamentary delegation, the tactics of besieging of Chechen residential areas leads to "civilian casualties, serious destructions and, as a result, joining of Dudayev's detachments by combat-able men aged 16 to 50 years."

The State Duma is going to put on the agenda of its March 20 meeting a resolution on developments in southern Chechnya.

The Duma sets out to hasten the setting up of a joint commission of representatives of President Boris Yeltsin, the government and both parliamentary houses to add to other commissions for settlement in Chechnya.

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CIS: CIS Presidents Condemn Duma Resolution on Reviving USSR

MM1903100296 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 19 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Feature comprising report by Aleksandr Gamov followed by interviews with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev, and Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev by Yevgeniy Dotsuk, Olga Musafirova, and Kamil Bayalinov, respectively: "View from the Sixth Floor: Can the Bison Be Driven Into the Forest Again?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Translated into simple plain language the CIS leaders' opinions that we are publishing on page two today concerning what the Russian Duma did last Friday [15 March] sound harsh: "This was political churlishness."

Why were our neighbors so alarmed? Was it really only a matter of a document, which effectively has no binding force for anyone?

Unlike Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, who, judging by what he said, is not inclined to take seriously his house's "revivalist" decree, some people have no intention of joking. Moreover, there are plenty of them. Possibly without actually being aware of it, the Zyuganovite deputies have given extremist forces in the near abroad a tremendous trump card: They are saying, they want to occupy our states again!

Everyone now is talking about the bomb that the Duma has planted under the unsteady, frail CIS that was set up so painstakingly. But its explosive force — if, God forbid, it does nonetheless happen — will primarily affect the Russian-speaking population in the former Union republics and that may destabilize the situation in the near abroad and seriously complicate its relationship with Russia.

There is every indication that the Duma has really failed to consider this "aspect." Otherwise it would not have been so foolish.

What solution do President Yeltsin and his CIS counterparts see to the current critical situation? What moves should they be expected to make in the near future? They will most likely counter the revival, on paper, of a Union that is longer there to be resurrected with the real formation of a Commonwealth of Independent States. We recently witnessed the touching unity of the Russian and Belarusian peoples in the person of Boris Yeltsin and Alyaksandr Lukashenka. One can certainly assume that this spring, possibly even sooner, Moscow will strengthen its kinship ties with Alma-Aty, Bishkek.... Anywhere you please....

And another point. Strictly speaking, the lower house's Friday decree cannot be called a parliamentary decree even with a lot of latitude. It was a decision by the Communist election headquarters, which is what part of the Duma is gradually becoming. And since that is the case it should be regarded as an "intraparty" decree. That is probably the reason why the democratic Kremlin has no intention of taking "extreme measures" against the "Communist Duma" — evidently counting on the latter's making its opponents a "gift" of plenty of other foolish actions before the elections. But what if the price of this stupidity is so high? Will the voters and taxpayers agree to "fund" such costly and sensational political games? [Gamov report ends]

Presidents Say This Is Hardly Likely. Commonwealth Sovereign States' Top Men Comment on State Duma Decision at Our Correspondents' Request

[Kuchma] The Russian Federation's supreme legislative organ has shown what it really thinks. It is thinking about a return to the Soviet Union without asking the opinion of the Ukrainians, Kazakhs, and other peoples. Ukraine's view is that this is tremendously tactless and develops one country's enmity for another. After all, the Ukrainian people made up their mind 1 December 1991 during the independence referendum. You can see what path the State Duma and the forces which prevail therein are choosing. We can see who has won and who has lost. [Kuchma ends]

[Nazarbayev] I still support the integration of the post-Soviet area. But at a meeting of the heads of state 19 January I did warn of the pernicious consequences of any actions aimed at restoring the Soviet Union. My biggest fear has always been that integration would be tackled for election purposes, that deputies would be motivated by political games rather than good will. I do not even think that anyone will retyurn to this issue in earnest after the elections, but the very idea of civilized integration may be compromised.

Time has created new political and economic realities. Namely an increase in the former republics' autonomous economic interests. They have different kinds of economic reform, very different political backgrounds, and, lastly, a different set of cultural values. You cannot fail to see this, it would be even greater folly to try to willfully overcome the objective trends in post-Soviet development. In this situation slogans calling for the restoration of the USSR, which pose a threat to national sovereignty, will alienate our countries still further.

The champions of the old country who have suddenly come to life are regrettably already hopelessly behind

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the times. What kind of Union do they want to revive today? That of Brezhnev? Do they want to restore a system that has suffered an insulting economic defeat in the world? Do they want to revert to "socialism with a human face"? To Stalinism? To repressions?

I still insist that integration at the turn of the 21st century primarily means cultural and economic influence on one another. I am convinced that we must rely on a civilized model of Eurasia. We can now see the experience of the European Union. We must elaborate a treaty to deepen economic and humanitarian integration. If all this takes place, virtually 70 percent of the economy of the former CIS will be united. And I think that there is a fine name for this union, namely the Economic Eurasian Union.

[Akayev] I regard the Russian State Duma decree of 15 March solely as a political act, aiming to secure victory in the election campaign. This is the Russian Federation's internal affair although it also affects the interests of many independent states. But the decision will not have any legal consequences in the CIS because it even contravenes the current Russian Constitution.

As for the integration processes within the Commonwealth countries, they are gaining momentum, therefore the intervention of a third force can only hamper them....

I do not think that the State Duma decision can affect relations between Kyrgyzstan and Russia. These decisions are no more than a political move in the campaign for the presidency.

CIS: Shevardnadze Proposes Meeting of CIS Heads of State

LD1903191096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze has proposed that the heads of CIS states gather for a special summit to discuss the Russian Duma's decision that effectively denounced the Belovezh Accords abolishing the Soviet Union and creating the CIS. He made this statement in Moscow on Tuesday after the signing of a joint Russian-Georgian declaration.

Shevardnadze expressed deep concern over the Duma decision and said: "No one should think that this question interests only Russia. This involves a return to a totalitarian regime that affects the interests of all CIS independent states."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin agreed with this proposal. He said he was prepared to hold such a meeting in any CIS capital city, but "in this case it would be more convenient to meet in Moscow."

The Duma's actions, continued Yeltsin, and "its deputies' stupid decision, harmful for Russia and other CIS countries," have great negative consequences. "The Duma has encroached upon Russia's statehood, which is persecuted by the constitution," said the president. Under the constitution, the Duma has no right to tackle the problems of the country's statehood. It must be brought to account for its irresponsible actions, he said.

Meanwhile, some of the CIS presidents had sent Yeltsin letters in response to the Duma vote.

Ukraine President Leonid Kuchma views this document as a serious threat to inner CIS relations in general and to Russian-Ukrainian relations in particular.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev urged Yeltsin to take adequate measures and inform the CIS leaders of the steps made. The Duma vote, he writes, may lead to CIS disintegration.

Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev qualified the vote as a destabilizing factor in the CIS.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan described the Duma vote as "an insolent attempt to undermine the legal foundations of the CIS" and urged President Yeltsin to prevent this.

President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov considers the Duma vote to be "a call for the restoration of the communist ideology."

Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev believes that the resolution of the State Duma may lead to the CIS breakup.

Moldovan President Mircea Snegur qualified the Duma vote as an attempt to torpedo broad economic cooperation between the CIS countries.

CIS: CIS Executive Secretary Criticizes Russian Duma Vote

LD1903192496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 53 (1046) compiled by Anna Kovalyova, Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovsky, Boris Yunanov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "The Russian State Duma vote denouncing the CIS accords was motivated by momentary political considerations," CIS Executive Secretary Ivan Korotchenya told Interfax in Minsk.

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"This move by the communist majority was made in defiance of the rules of the election struggle and is calculated for a propaganda impact," he said.

From the legal point of view, the denunciation of the CIS accords cannot entail any serious consequences because it may acquire the status of a law only if it is supported by the upper house of the Russian parliament and approved by the Russian president, he argues.

He said that integration tendencies were gaining momentum in the CIS although "the pace of integration is not as fast as it should be."

He is convinced that "the search for new forms and principles of mutually advantageous cooperation is bringing good results." As an example he referred to the creation of a customs union by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia, which three other republics are ready to join.

The upcoming conclusion of an accord on multilateral cooperation and broad contacts between Russia and Belarus, the agreement on which was reached by the Russian and Belarusian presidents in Moscow at the end of February, is "a good example" for other states to follow, he continued.

Over the four years since its foundation, the CIS has proved its viability, readiness for improvement and ability to take the interests of all member-states into account, said Korotchenya.

He announced that Russian President Boris Yeltsin had approved the idea of the CIS executive secretary and of the International Commonwealth Fund to publish a book devoted to the 5th anniversary of the CIS.

To quote Korotchenya, the Russian president who is a co-chairman of the Council of the CIS leaders, has instructed the Russian government "to consider the possibility of funding the project and involving other member-states in financing it."

"As conceived by the authors, the book will be a well-illustrated gift publication and, simultaneously, an objective history of the creation and development of the CIS," said Korotchenya.

He said the book will highlight the key moments in the history of the CIS: summits which produced historic decisions, international projects and the implementation of accords and agreements.

A chapter will be specially devoted to the CIS leaders and present their assessment of the past, the present and the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The book is to be published in Russian and English in the first half of 1996.

CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 20 Mar

LD2003063696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0547 GMT 20 Mar 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Today's newspapers highlight the situation around the resolutions adopted by the State Duma on the denunciation of Belovezh agreements. "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" says that the Federation Council began its fourth session with debates on two resolutions adopted by the State Duma on March 15, 1996. The newspaper says that a number of senators suggested that these resolution be overlooked, but Chairman of the Federation Council Yegor Stroyev explained that since the Russian President had sent a letter to the senators, asking them to discuss the situation this question should be put on the agenda of the session the Federation Council.

"Komsomolskaya Pravda" writes in this connection that lawmaker of the State Duma Sergey Baburin, who was summoned to the Federation Council, was called by the senators as the "author responsible for this turmoil" and ordered to "return to the constitutional framework." "The experience of 1993 shows that once the question of the "framework" and "constitutional field" was raised — mischief was near at hand," the newspaper said. During the session Boris Yeltsin's letter was circulated in which the president said in jest that once the former Soviet Union was being restored, Boris Yeltsin was "the only constitutional body of power" in Russia since he was elected in the Soviet era, while the powers of all the rest, including Gorbachev, had long expired. The situation at the session of the Federation Council took an " explosive" turn after head of the administration of the Moscow region Anatoliy Tyazhlov had raised the question urging to postpone presidential elections in Russia.

The "Krasnaya Zvezda" comments on a briefing held by Presidential spokesman Sergey Medvedev who described a meeting between President Yeltsin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. In particular, the Georgian president put forward an initiative suggesting a meeting of all heads of the CIS states to discuss the situation which unfolded after the State Duma had adopted its resolutions on the denunciation of the Belovezh agreements which caused so much ado. Medvedev mentioned telegrams which came to Boris Yeltsin from many leaders of the CIS states in which they expressed their concern over the resolution passed by the lower chamber of the Russian parliament.

"Komsomolskaya Pravda" says in its commentary on developments in Chechnya that two Orthodox priests,

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father Anatoliy and father Sergey, taken hostage by Chechen militants shortly after the developments in Kizlyar and Pervomayskoye might possibly be released during the next two weeks. "Our source close to Dudayev's leadership reported that the priests had been really kidnapped by the militants most likely to be people loyal to field commander Akhmed Zakayev who is far from being in the last place in the hierarchy of Dudayev's top commanders," the newspaper said.

"Izvestiya" comments on the situation in the settlement of Samashki. Reports which came from Groznyy early on March 19 said that federal troops had entered the settlement of Samashki where around 250 Dudayev's militants were allegedly staying. Prior to the arrival of federal troops the settlement which had been fully blockaded came under artillery fire. "A clean-up" began in Samashki. The regional centers of Achkhoy-Martan situated several kilometers away from Samashki, the settlements of Orekhovo and Bamut are being methodically bombarded and shelled from heavy guns, and the people remain stranded in basements for several days already, the newspaper said. The settlement of Achkhoy has never been under Dudayev's militants' control despite their repeated claims to the contrary. At present, the local population is trying to do as much as possible to prevent the militants from breaking through to the village, being well aware what consequences this invasion might entail for peaceful civilians. Scores of thousands of refugees from nearby villages have gathered here, apart from the local population. The refugees have nowhere to go. Their houses were reduced to rubble and all roads around the village have been fully blockaded.

"Komsomolskaya Pravda" carries an article suggesting a hypothesis that the famous "Amber Room" is located at the Borne-Sulinovo base on the Polish territory.

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Russia: Yeltsin Orders 'Active Plan' To Counter Duma Decision

LD1903175596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1728 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has ordered his foreign ministry to develop an active plan to "minimize the consequences" of the Duma's resolutions to effectively cancel the 1991 Belovezh Accords dissolving the USSR, First Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov told a Tuesday press conference.

The Foreign Ministry passed on the order to all of Russia's embassies abroad to work so that there will be no "practical consequences to the Duma resolution," he said.

The Duma resolutions "have no international legal consequences," Ivanov said. But they did significantly complicate work in certain priority directions of Russian foreign policy.

Speaking on the European Union, Ivanov said Russia is not yet discussing entering the EU, as neither Russia nor the EU are ready for such a move, he said.

He rejected the opinion that Russia is against the expansion of the EU.

"We are against the expansion of NATO," he said. "But the European Union was created for economic integration, and we have no reasons for opposing its expansion."

Russia: CIS Leaders Telegram Yeltsin in Condemnation of Duma Action

LD1903161296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1505 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By an ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Mar — The heads of eight of the ten states that belong to the CIS, apart from Russia, have unequivocally condemned the decision of the State Duma effectively annulling the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements in telegrams addressed to Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin. The texts of the telegrams from the presidents of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Moldavia, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine were presented to ITAR-TASS by the press service of the Russian Federation president. No reactions to the State Duma decision addressed to the Russian president have been received by his apparatus from the heads of Belarus and Tajikistan.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan calls the decision of the State Duma "a blatant attempt by communist forces to undermine the juridical foundations of the CIS" and calls on Boris Yeltsin "to take the necessary protective measures" to preserve the Commonwealth.

Azerbaijan President Geydar Aliyev believes it "can damage the democratic reforms being carried out in the independent states who are members of the Commonwealth."

The telegram from Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze states that this decision "contains a destructive force and has the aim of destabilizing the situation in Russia itself on the threshold of the presidential elections and in the Commonwealth states."

Kyrghyz President Askar Akayev also sees the aim of destabiliation in it and calls for intensifying the processes of integration, but "without infringing the political independence of states."

In the view of Nursultan Nazarbayev, the president of Kazakhstan, the State Duma decision causes "serious damage to the processes of integration" and jeopardizes the very existence of the CIS.

The belief in Chisinau is that this is a case of wrecking "the democratic changes in the new independent states," writes President Mircea Snegur.

President Islam Karimov indicates that the decision has been received in Uzbekistan as a call for "a return to a totalitarian system."

Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma saw in it a threat of "worsening relations between the new independent states" and, in particular, to the further development of friendly Ukrainian-Russian relations.

All the telegrams stress that the State Duma decision has no legal force.

Russia: Medvedev: Duma Move May Hasten NATO's Eastward Expansion

LD1903142096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1344 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — The State Duma's resolution renouncing the Belovezh agreement may motivate NATO to step up its plan to enlarge eastwards, the Russian president's spokesman Sergey Medvedev told a briefing in the Kremlin on Tuesday.

He said the Duma's move may become a big card in the hands of NATO in its negotiations with Russia on the enlargement plan.

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Commenting on the coming Friday meeting between President Boris Yeltsin and NATO Secretary General Javier Solana, the presidential spokesman said the sides have different stances on the NATO plan, but they should still meet to compose the differences.

Medvedev reiterated that Moscow opposes NATO's moving to Russia's borders.

Russia: Marchuk, Christopher Discuss Nuclear Safety, U.S. Aid

LD1903185696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1657 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 19 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukrainian Prime Minister Yevheniy Marchuk met in Kiev Tuesday with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to discuss U.S. aid to Ukraine, problems involved in the shut-down of the Chernobyl NPP [Nuclear Power Plant] and implementation of the tripartite agreement between the Presidents of Ukraine, the United States and Russia on nuclear disarmament.

Answering a question from IF-U [INTERFAX-UKRAINE] after the meeting, Y.Marchuk said that "the point at issue was to specify U.S. aid to Ukraine." Until now, the Ukrainian Premier noted, more often than not U.S. aid was channelled to "the needs, which were not priority ones." "The U.S. side has expressed concern with it," Y.Marchuk said.

According to him, understanding was reached in the course of the meeting on the visit of a Ukrainian delegation to the United States to discuss American credits and technical aid to Ukraine.

Ukraine, he said, also proposes that a "comprehensive agreement" be signed to settle the issue of closure of the Chernobyl NPP. "Until now the memorandum and other agreements signed between the two countries contained only common approaches," the Prime Minister said.

He also said that the problem remains of withdrawal of nuclear warheads from Ukraine's territory in exchange for fuel for nuclear power plants. "This is not to say that this problem has been settled. It simply exists and shall be discussed," the Ukrainian Premier said.

In keeping with the tripartite statement by the three presidents of January 14, 1994, Ukraine is withdrawing nuclear warheads to Russia in exchange for nuclear fuel for her NPPs. On its part, the United States is assisting in recycling the active substance of the warheads into nuclear fuel.

Russia: U.S. General Arrives in Moscow on Official Visit

LD1903135896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1049 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — The Chief of Staff of U.S. ground troops, General Dennis Rhiner, arrived in Moscow for an official visit on Tuesday, a source in the press service of Russia's ground troops told Interfax.

The general will stay in Russia till Friday, the source said. The program of his visit includes meetings with the Chief of General Staff General Mikhail Kolesnikov and with the Commander in Chief of ground troops Cl.-General Vladimir Semyonov, and a visit to the Frunze Military Academy.

The U.S. general's visit is taking place in accordance with the Russian Defense Ministry's plan for developing ties with the armies of foreign countries, the source said.

Russia: Karasin: U.S. Paper Violates 'Confidentiality' of ABM Talks

LD1903163296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — A Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman has described a WASHINGTON POST article published last Thursday as a gross violation of the agreed principle of confidentiality in respect of issues discussed by the permanent consultative committee on the observance of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

Similar articles carried by the WASHINGTON POST in the past "do not help resolve the problem," Grigoriy Karasin said in an Interfax interview on Tuesday.

He said the committee was meeting in Geneva to discuss agreements on distinguishing between strategic and tactical ABMs.

The spokesman said the idea is to try to establish such limitation parameters for tactical ABMs that can help prevent them to be used in the interests of strategic ABMs.

"This would help prevent any bypassing of the 1972 ABM treaty which is a key factor in continued strategic stability," Karasin said.

He said any attempt to bypass or devalue the treaty could also affect the ratification of the START-II treaty, now under discussion by the Russian parliament.

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Russia: Delegation To Go to U.S. To Discuss Fowl Exports

LD1903172996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1712 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Konstantin Savvin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — A Russian delegation will leave for Washington on Wednesday to negotiate over further U.S. exports of fowl to Russia, an Agriculture Ministry spokesman told Business-Tass on Tuesday.

The delegation will be led by Russian Chief Veterinary Inspector Vyacheslav Avilov.

The Russian Agriculture Ministry Veterinary Department has suspended U.S. fowl exports on the grounds that they do not meet standards laid down by the veterinary certificate to which the U.S. veterinary service agreed last summer.

Earlier licensed U.S. exports of chicken parts are so far reaching Russia, but Russian veterinary services have stepped up standard control.

The Russian delegation is to discuss in Washington the American pledge to tighten sanitary control of U.S.-produced fowl.

Russia: Washington Urged To Treat Russia as 'Equal'

MM1903150396 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Rear Admiral of the Reserve Levon Vartanyan and Colonel Viktor Solodkiy under the rubric "Russia's Interests": "Not an Ally, Not an Enemy. What, Then?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] What is the United States to our country, in the new geostrategic situation that has developed in the world since the end of the "Cold War" — a strategic ally, a partner, an implacable rival, or a probable enemy?... This is no idle question, since a patent contradiction can be observed between what is said about Russian-U.S. relations in diplomatic language, and what is happening in this sphere in practice.

As is well known, the new chapter in relations between our countries began back in the years of Soviet perestroyka. Even then its leaders, seeking to win Washington's favor, began to play up to it in every way. And in the course of talks on strategic arms problems, under cover of illusory panhuman values, they accepted "breakthroughs" which, not infrequently, they knew to be damaging to national interests. The young Russian diplomacy continued this policy. For the next three years all it did, in the main, was to ingratiate itself with Washington and cadge from it.

And what about the United States? The U.S. Administration tried to exploit the changed geopolitical situation to consolidate the status of the United States as the sole and leading world superpower and extend its interests to every region of the world, including the territory of the former USSR, and also to considerably strengthen NATO and announce, in essence, its inevitable advance to the East.

A paradoxical situation has apparently arisen — one of the leading world socioeconomic systems has disintegrated, the Warsaw Pact Organization has ceased to exist, Russia has officially proclaimed that it has no enemies, and yet the United States and NATO are continuing persistently to increase military might.

In fact there is nothing paradoxical here. There is a simple explanation for everything. On the one hand, as already stated, the United States is extracting the maximum possible advantage from the change in the world's structure and acting according to the age-old principle "strike while the iron's hot." On the other hand, it is not part of the American tradition to raze to the ground what took decades to create and on which vast resources were spent.

In 1994-1995, on the basis of broad scientific research, fundamental documents were drawn up in the United States and NATO. They include "U.S. National Security Strategy," "U.S. National Military Strategy," "The Strategy of European Integration," "U.S. Defense Strategy for the Nineties," "Basic Provisions for NATO Expansion," "Strategy for the Development of Science and Technology," and others. These documents set forth the essence of the U.S. and NATO approach to the development of the world process. Thus, "U.S. National Security Strategy" stresses that the United States can and should influence world problems through its participation. Well-trained armed forces with high "national motivation" are regarded as the basis of the preservation of U.S. military leadership. According to American views, the new stage of the military-technical revolution requires the development of "crisis" technologies on the basis of "crack" research and the quest for new methods of organization and utilization of the armed forces. Their development should take place with a view to victory in two regional conflicts simultaneously.

The highest defense priority is still to deter nuclear attack. The preservation of viable and flexible U.S. strategic nuclear forces is described as the most important deterrent factor and a barrier to the use of modern nuclear weapons. Certain U.S. circles advocate the creation of a large-scale ABM defense system with space-based

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components. Another important element in the strategic deterrent is the potential for an improved system of strategic command and control, communications, and intelligence.

In connection with the tenets of American strategy, the forward basing of U.S. armed forces is intended to have a decisive influence on the processes of shaping the situation in the world. This should include the prior stockpiling of equipment for the buildup of groupings of forces and provision for their accelerated redeployment. In those regions of the world where there are no American military bases on land, the presence of naval forces and long-range aircraft is envisaged without fail.

That, in general terms, is the content of U.S. strategy in the military sphere. Taking into account the particular nature of the newspaper's readership, we have deliberately emphasized this particular aspect of U.S. policy. The actions of that country's ruling circles in other spheres — the economy, diplomacy, domestic policy — could be characterized similarly. They are all aimed at achieving a single goal — winning global leadership by "soft" means. Russia's place in bilateral relations stems objectively from this.

It is quite clear that we will not become strategic allies and partners. In any case this is not part of the U.S. foreign policy tradition — cooperation with countries that are its equals (the years of World War II are perhaps the exception). The entire practice of relations with the NATO allies, and in recent years with Russia, indicates that the United States prefers to operate according to the formula "the leader and the led." And whenever the interests of an ally or partner do not coincide with U.S. interests, Washington stubbornly tries to impose its own position.

Let us recall Washington's demarche in connection with Russia's decision to supply India with cryogenic engines. The United States did everything to wreck this deal, which in some way affected its interests in the region. Political pressure and economic sanctions blackmail and slander — they were all employed. When Moscow, under this pressure, adjusted the agreement in the direction of a reduction in the scale of the deal, Washington did not even apologize for its behavior. And what irritation was aroused in the White House when Moscow decided to adopt an autonomous position on the Balkan conflict after several years of going along with the West! Or take the latest example, perhaps not so significant, although it can be looked at in different ways. The question of restricting imports of "Bush's [chicken] legs" into the country for health reasons. A purely economic problem was promptly given a political gloss by the United States — threats to put Moscow in its place once again came pouring across the ocean.

That is not the way to behave with an equal partner or ally. And this U.S. approach to cooperation certainly does not suit Russia. Provided, of course, that Russia's leaders are not deliberately condemning the country to a secondary role. But in that case what is the point of saying that Russia is a great power?

Nor does it suit our countries, or indeed the whole world, obviously, for relations to be at a level such that they regard each other as implacable rivals or, even worse, probable enemies. One would wish to hope that the times of confrontation, especially when it turns into rivalry in the arms sphere, have gone forever.

In our view, relations between Russia and the United States should be based on the principle of "civilized competition." The word "rival," applied to Russia, may make some people smile. But we are confident that our country will without fail overcome the present crisis and win its appropriate place in the international arena. And it will offer competition not only with its nuclear missiles, but with its entire economy, its entire way of life in general. As for the term "civilized," in this context that means that competition will take place within the framework of generally recognized norms and will not sink to the level of threats, blackmail, or arm-twisting.

This principle makes it possible for our countries to be true partners in resolving those international problems on which their interests coincide. And while competing, to avoid risk and confrontation where these interests clash or are opposed. However, the development of relations on this principle is possible only on condition that the United States recognizes Russia in practice as its equal, as a state worthy of respect.

Russia: U.S. Could 'Upset' Food-for-Arms Deal With Argentina

MM1903125296 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 7

[Report by Sergey Zavorotnyy: "Russian Generals Not Allowed To Dance Argentine Tango. Americans Try To Wreck Our Major Military Deal"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires — If anyone is going to save Russians from starvation, it will most likely be Sergey Svechnikov, the current chairman of the State Committee for Military-Technical Policy. His delegation has finally visited Argentina, land of meat and dairy products, and offered the local military brand-new arms in exchange for food shipments to Russia. This idea was bound to appeal to the Argentines: The

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pockets of their military have long been empty and threadbare.

Can a general really resist offers like, for instance, those to assemble modern Russian civil and military helicopters in Argentina, equip the army and special units with NATO-standard Kalashnikovs, and set up a flight training center.

Nonetheless the Americans may stop us from shining in the role of Christ, who fed tens of thousands [as published] of his followers with seven [as published] loaves of bread. They have kept a disapproving eye on the tango involving Russian and Argentine generals being performed before their eyes. They could upset this duet since there are plenty of influential people in Argentina who are opposed to the military's flirting with Russia. Foreign Minister Guido di Tella is opposed to the procurement of arms and military hardware from Russia. The minister thinks that Argentina should only buy military equipment from those countries with which Buenos Aires has "emotional" and "physical" links. There is every indication that Moscow does not yet figure on this list of "heartthrobs."

Russia: Atomic Ministry Denies New Nuclear Deal With Iran

LD1903163196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — Apart from a contract to construct the first unit of the Bushehr facility, Russia has not signed any other nuclear deals with Iran, representatives of the atomic energy ministry told Interfax on Tuesday.

They said the question is not one of building a new nuclear plant, but the second unit of the Bushehr station.

The two sides have not held any talks on this question yet. Everything will depend on how the initial project is implemented. The Russian ministry does not rule out that Moscow and Tehran may consider widening cooperation in two years from now.

The Bushehr facility is being built as part of the bilateral deal of August 25, 1992, on cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The agreement provided for the installation of four nuclear reactors at Bushehr - two light water VVER-1000s (1,000-megawatt capacity each) and two VVER-440s (440-megawatt capacity each).

The two sides met in January to sign an $800-million contract on the construction of the first power unit with a VVER-1000 reactor, and work is now underway to implement the project, the first of its kind so far.

Germany's Siemens started building the first and second units of the Bushehr station in 1975, but the German government suspended the project four years later. In 1992-1993, Iran asked Russia to take part in completing the Bushehr project.

Russia: Yeltsin Receives Japanese Foreign Minister

LD2003095196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0843 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin received Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda in the Kremlin on Wednesday. He welcomed the Minister who arrived for an official visit in Russia. "We have not met for long," the President said, "and it is time to compare our positions. There is a number of problems to be discussed. We attach much importance to relations with Japan and favour an active political dialogue."

Questions of preparation for a meeting of leaders of eight countries on nuclear security, to be held in Moscow, were discussed at the meeting. Matters connected with the forthcoming visit to Russia by Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto who will attend the summit were also touched upon. In addition, matters of bilateral relations were discussed, said Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev.

The Japanese Foreign Minister will conduct today negotiations with his Russian counterpart Yevgeniy Primakov and will participate in the first session of the bilateral intergovernmental commission on trade and economic problems whose co-chairmen are Yukihiko Ikeda and Russian First Deputy Premier Oleg Soskovets.

Russia: Primakov, Japan's Ikeda Hold Talks on Cooperation

LD2003113396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1023 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov today said, "Russia is interested in the development of relations with Japan along all lines, and no obstacles must impede the development."

Primakov was speaking at the beginning of his talks with Japanese counterpart Yukihiko Ikeda, who is in Moscow on an official visit.

The Russian Minister said the Japanese Foreign Minister's meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Wednesday morning "set the constructive tone for our talks," which are "of great significance" to Moscow.

The talks in the Russian Foreign Ministry's mansion in Spiridonyevskaya Street in central Moscow will cover

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the entire range of bilateral relations, including not only political dialogue but also the problem of cooperation in fishing off the South Kuril islands.

Moscow and Tokyo will also compare notes on a number of international issues, focusing primarily on the situation in the Asian-Pacific region.

It is not ruled out that the Russian and Japanese ministers will exchange views on the situation in the Taiwan Strait and on the Korean peninsula, including the food problem in North Korea.

Russia: Japan Approach to Territorial Dispute Seen Unfair

MM1903155596 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 15

[Report by Aleksey Baliyev: "We Are Not Keeping What We Have. Why Do Japanese Maps Include South Kurils As Part of Japan?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to information from Japanese sources, the Japanese Government intends to achieve a fundamental resolution this year of the "disputed issue" in relations with Russia — namely, recognition by Moscow of the fact that the South Kuril Islands (Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan, and Habomai) were "occupied by the former USSR" in 1945 and should therefore be returned to their "rightful owner." The islands have already been included as part of Japan on Japanese maps....

But the peace treaty that was signed in San Francisco in 1951 declares that all the islands of the Kuril Chain (along with southern Sakhalin) would be returned to the USSR-Russia, and the Japanese side has not been and is not advocating the denunciation of that treaty.

But the economic background to the Japanese claims is pretty weighty. The fact is that the maritime area around the South Kuril Archipelago covers no less than 200,000 square km of Russia's economic zone and is home to crabs, Pacific saury, salmon, squid, trepang, and other valuable varieties of seafood. According to figures from the Russian Federation Committee for Fishing, the potential annual catch of fish alone is over 2 million tonnes.

But if the islands were to be handed over to Japan, the Russian Federation would have to buy licenses from the Japanese authorities to fish in this region, which — given the loss of the greater part of the Russian Federation's maritime economic zone — would cost Russia around $2.5-3 billion, according to estimates from the Russian Federation Committee for Fishing.

The Japanese press has repeatedly noted that the South Kuril waters would substantially increase Japan's "fish export potential," since the main regions where many varieties of fish live and migrate are not "yet" covered by the Japanese economic zone proper in the Pacific. We would also note that production as well as exports of all kinds of fish powder and other concentrates have been one of the leading subsectors of the fish processing industry in Japan ever since 1960. But the functioning of this subsector is still based on imported raw materials. But with the "help" of the South Kurils the situation in this sphere of the Japanese economy could change substantially — the country would reduce its foreign currency (import) costs for raw materials.

Moreover, there are known industrial reserves of gold and a number of nonferrous metal ores, mercury, iron pyrites, natural gas, and coal present in the South Kurils, and those are raw materials which Japan imports.

So economic factors are by no means the least consideration in the galvanization of Tokyo's campaign for a revision of the Japanese-Russian border in the South Kuril region.

Inspired by the situation "around" the South Kurils, the Japanese side is calling in its talks with the Russian Federation on fishery issues for "free" fishing of the waters near the South Kurils and for the "opening up" of the island and adjoining waters to operations by Japanese companies and banks. There are also increasingly frequent cases of violations of the Japanese-Russian border in the South Kuril region by Japanese fishing boats and other vessels.

But, while striving to obtain "monopoly" privileges from Russia in this region, Japan is not asking for the same thing from the United States in Micronesia — in the region of the Marshall Islands, the Marianas, the Caroline Islands, and Palau, which were owned by Japan in 1917-1945. Since World War II these islands have been under U.S. sovereignty. Tokyo is not only staking no claim to these territories, it is also not calling for free economic "access" to Micronesia. Nor is Tokyo demanding this from the PRC, the Republic of China (Taiwan), South Korea, or the DPRK — despite Japan's existing territorial claims against those countries (some of those states' territories were part of Japan prior to 1945).

Tokyo is deciding not to pursue with the United States, the PRC, Taiwan, the DPRK, and South Korea the same policy as is the case on the South Kuril question. Japan still disputes China's ownership of the Senkaku Islands and a number of other islands, but a peace treaty was signed with the PRC in 1978 and with Taiwan in 1952. But there are major reserves of oil and gas known to be

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present on the Senkaku Shelf, and Beijing and Taipei are not allowing Japanese companies to take part in the development of the shelf.

But Tokyo is behaving differently with Russia. Why would that be?

Russia: Premier Meets Greek Foreign Minister

LD2003105596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0931 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — "Russia and Greece have traditionally warm and friendly relations, and we shall preserve and develop this tradition," Russian premier Viktor Chernomyrdin said here on Wednesday at a meeting with visiting Greek Foreign Minister Theodhoros Pangalos at the Friendship House in Moscow.

The Russian premier stressed that the governments of the two countries face the task of stepping up bilateral relations both in the political as well as in the trade and economic spheres.

Today's meeting discussed a broad range of bilateral relations as well as the political situation in the Mediterranean and on the Balkans.

Russia: Shevardnadze Gives Reasons for Not Meeting Duma Speaker

LD1903155396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1400 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Georgian President] Eduard Shevardnadze's meeting with Russian State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, which was scheduled for today, has been cancelled. The head of the Duma's press center told journalists that, according to unconfirmed reports, by decision of the Georgian side the meeting will not now take place.

Speaking of the cancellation, Seleznev said that this cannot contribute to improving Russian-Georgian relations, while the Georgian president said: Our program is oversaturated and, in general, we decided to make some changes to it. We decided not to visit the State Duma at this time. I must be honest with you, I have discussed this issue with Yegor Semenovich [not further identified] and I am certain that Georgia as well as other countries of the Commonwealth are seriously worried about the resolution which was adopted by the State Duma. I think that not everything has been thought through, examined carefully, so to speak. There are grounds for serious anxiety.

Russia: Duma Chairman Critical of Shevardnadze Not Seeing Him

LD1903181496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze's refusal to meet with Russian State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznyov, as was planned before, may cause excessive tensions among the Duma deputies Wednesday, Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznyov told journalists Tuesday.

This decision by the Georgian leader will not add to the improvement of Russian-Georgian relations, especially considering that the Duma is to ratify a bilateral treaty, Seleznyov warned.

According to Georgian diplomats, Shevardnadze will not meet with Seleznyov because of changes in his schedule. They said Shevardnadze will visit the Federation Council instead.

Seleznyov also criticized Shevardnadze for having urged for an emergency summit of CIS heads of state to discuss the virtual denunciation of the 1991 accords which disbanded the former Soviet Union and founded the CIS. "The Georgian president always convokes emergency summits and pushes through extremely unpopular resolutions, like the one against Abkhazia that he pushed through at last January's CIS summit in Moscow," he said. "God save the CIS leaders from biting his present initiatives."

Russia: Shevardnadze Warns Duma About Restoration of USSR

LD1903214596 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today in the Kremlin, an official dinner was given to honor Eduard Shevardnadze. Apart from the Russian president, other leaders of the country, including the speakers of both houses of the Federal Assembly, were present at the dinner. This did not prevent Shevardnadze from expressing his attitude once more to the scandalous decision by the State Duma.

[Begin Shevardnadze recording] The Belovezh agreements essentially saved our peoples from the sad Yugoslav option. It was no longer possible to hold the nations together at gunpoint and by way of deception. I will say in this connection that any attempts or even just talk about the restoration of the USSR can destroy the still fragile shoots of mutual trust and undermine the germinating processes of integration in the Commonwealth of the Independent States. Furthermore, this can develop into the beginning of the end of our commonwealth with the most unpredictable consequences for the (?whole) of the Eurasian space. [end recording]

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Moves To Eliminate Uncertainty Caused by Duma Vote

LD2003111996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1057 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin today sent a draft federal law "On ensuring stability of the legal system of the Russian Federation and confirming Russia's international commitments" to the State Duma for consideration, informed sources in the Kremlin told Itar-Tass.

According to the sources, this legislative initiative of the head of state is designed to remove the legal uncertainty of the State Duma resolutions adopted since March 15, 1996 when the lower house of Russian parliament adopted its scandalous resolution concerning the Belovezh agreements.

In a letter addressed to Duma speaker Gennadiy Seleznev the President asked the lower house to consider the new law ahead of turn.

Legal uncertainty that arose after the State Duma on March 15 adopted a resolution which elicited a stormy reaction both in Russia and in the world must be eliminated, but the President does not ask the State Duma to revoke its resolutions, Kremlin experts who asked not to be named told Itar-Tass in explaining the meaning of the President's move.

"The thing is that if the law submitted by the President to the State Duma today is approved, a purely political character will be attached to the March 15 resolutions, and their juridical character will be removed," the experts said.

"Incidentally, both the Duma speaker, Gennadiy Seleznev, and the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Gennadiy Zyuganov, have repeatedly stressed that the resolutions in question were purely political in character."

The State Duma on March 15 adopted documents providing, among other things, for the annulment of the resolution adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on December 12, 1991 to denounce the 1922 agreement on the formation of the Soviet Union.

The Russian President on March 16 declared that those resolutions were "actually designed to create a situation of political and legal impasse in Russia" and that they "call into doubt the legitimacy of bodies of state authority including the present State Duma."

The decision to denounce the agreement on the formation of the Union of SSR was adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR in December 1991 hot on the heels of the signing by the leaders of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine of the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, whose preamble stated that the USSR "ceases to exist."

The draft law sent by the head of state to the lower house of parliament today is designed to overcome the uncertainty which arose after March 15.

According to the Kremlin sources, the new law was worked out with a view to "eliminating uncertainty in the constitutional and legal framework of the resolutions adopted by the State Duma after March 15, 1996, preserving the Constitutional procedure of adopting laws and regulatory enactments by the houses of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, preventing unsurmountable contradictions in the legal system of the Russian Federation, and confirming Russia's international commitments."

Article 1 of the draft provides for the confirmation of the laws and other regulatory enactments adopted by the state power of Russia and remaining in effect in line with the procedure, established by the effective Constitution of the Russian Federation, including the agreement "On the formation of the CIS" signed in Minsk on December 8, 1991 and subsequently ratified by a resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, and the resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR dated December 12, 1991 "On the annulment of the agreement on the formation of the Union of SSR."

Another Article of the draft law provides for the confirmation of Russia's international commitments.

Russia: Duma Speaker 'Surprised' by Yeltsin Reaction to CIS Vote

LD1903161696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1446 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — Speaker of the Russian State Duma Gennadiy Seleznev "is very much surprised" by Russian President Yeltsin's address to the Federation Council concerning the lower house's decision on the effective denunciation of the 1991 Belovezh Accords, which disbanded the USSR and formed a basis for the CIS.

The president expressed his disagreement with the document passed by the Duma on Friday, even before he received its text, Seleznev told reporters in Moscow on Tuesday. The speaker said that he submitted this resolution to the president, government and the Federation Council only on Tuesday morning.

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If the Duma were to debate this item another time, he "would vote in favor again," said Seleznev.

"The Duma decision is a civil political document, it does not reinstate anything. All this is the media's propagandist tricks. Only a law can reinstate anything, but the drafting of such a law is outside the factions' plans," said Seleznev.

He is "shocked by the irresponsibility with which serious people who call themselves the presidents of the CIS countries give their assessments to the Duma document without even seeing it," he added.

"The leaders of the CIS countries are acting in the same way as they always did earlier when they were members of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee. General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev told them how they should react and they did as he asked them to," he said.

He said that at different times the current presidents of Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan were members of the Politburo.

Russia: Medvedev Condemns 'Obvious Damage' of Duma Vote

LD1903143896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1153 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Mar (Itar-Tass) — The decision taken by the Russian State Duma last Friday revoking the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements has inflicted obvious damage both on Russia and on the other states of the CIS, Sergey Medvedev, the Russian presidential press secretary, said at a briefing in the Kremlin today.

He described the State Duma decision as being like "a stone cast at Russian statehood."

Medvedev said the decisions were leading into a political and legal blind alley, and none of those who are affected by these decisions — primarily Russia and the countries of the Commonwealth — can see any way out. "It's curious that the State Duma has by its decision effectively removed itself from the legal sphere," Sergey Medvedev stressed. "They are declaring themselves illegitimate, while at the same time appealing to themselves," he said.

It is quite evident that the State Duma's decision, initiated by a faction of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, is indulging extreme nationalist forces that are aiming to prevent the integration of the CIS countries and the establishment of close ties between neighbors in the Commonwealth, the press secretary continued. Sergey Medvedev stressed at the same time that the Communists themselves have taken fright at their decision. "They didn't anticipate what effect the revocation of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements could have on them," he noted.

Then, the press secretary added, "there followed a provocative statement by [Gennadiy] Zyuganov, which I would put in the same category as the State Duma's decision" (this concerns a statement by the leader of the Communist Party on Monday that plans for a "forceful solution" are allegedly being drawn up in the president's entourage — correspondent's note). "Both are of a provocative nature," Sergey Medvedev noted. "But neither the president nor the bodies of federal power will give in to any provocations," he stressed. "No one will succeed in creating a confrontation between the presidential and legislative branches of power," Sergey Medvedev concluded.

Russia: Federation Council Head Calls Duma Vote 'Hasty, Mistaken'

LD1903205996 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Federation Council on 19 March discussed the State Duma's recent decision to revoke the Belovezh Accords setting up the CIS. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] In an exclusive interview with our program, Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the Federation Council, explained the upper chamber's position on the issues discussed and the Duma document as follows:

[Stroyev] It does not have any legal force. It was adopted as a resolution and it is, quite naturally, aimed at the election campaign. It did not appear out of thin air but was based on the pain which really exists among the people in connection with unification. I do not think that the Duma has gained anything from this decision, even from the political point of view. And those who are backing specific candidates have lost more, in my opinion. I began with this and will end on this: It was a hasty, mistaken decision.

[Correspondent] During the discussion of the Duma resolutions there were calls from the senators for the postponement, or the possible postponement, of the presidential elections. What is your view on this?

[Stroyev] I do not think the senators' calls are only being made today. They have been made before. And if the

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confrontation flares up then this topic will be included on the agenda anyway. Our task at the Federation Council is to move away from political confrontation. To let events leading to the presidential elections take their natural course." [end recording]

Russia: 'Details' Program Interviews Officials on Duma Decision

LD1903212296 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1735 GMT 19 Mar 96

[Report on Russian Federation Council meeting containing interviews with Russian Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev; Kabardino-Balkaria President Valeriy Kokov; Oleg Bogomolov, chairman of the Federation Council committee for links with the CIS; Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov; Tatar President Mintimer Shaymiyev; and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze; by Nikolay Svanidze in Moscow on 19 March — recorded; from the "Details" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Svanidze] Greetings. After after an intensive and emotional debate, Russia's Federation Council today adopted a message to the State Duma in connection with its decisions about the Belovezh agreements of 15 March. The Federation Council proposes that the lower chamber should review these decisions and once again carefully analyze the possible consequences of their adoption. This decision is diplomatic in form but very harsh in essence.

We met members of the Federation Council before the final resolution was drawn up.

[Begin recording] [Svanidze] Do you think the Duma will review its decision?

[Stroyev] I think first that it should adopt a well-considered decision and all the rest can follow.

[Svanidze] Do you think that the State Duma will to some extent be given the opportunity to save its political face in this situation?

[Kokov] I am convinced of this. In the final analysis, whatever interests or personal, group, or party ambitions inspired the comrades who prepared this document and who voted for it, the State Duma is, after all, a body of state power and a body which is formed by the whole people of Russia, all the electors of Russia and it should justify the hopes of the electors and not individual groups or parties or perhaps even individuals.

[Svanidze] Today at the meeting of the Federation Council proposals were made, including some very energetic ones, saying that either the Duma should review its decision or else the presidential elections should be postponed. Do you think that matters could go as far as that?

[Kokov] You see, Nikolay, the logic of the decision adopted by the Duma gives sufficient grounds for the existence of the idea that the elections should be postponed and for the proposal to be discussed. I think that if events develop unfavorably this problem will have to be discussed, and the Federation Council, as the body which determines the dates for holding the presidential elections, will have to return to this problem.

[Svanidze] So, you consider that if the Duma does not agree to a compromise and does not revise its decision, it is possible that the Federation Council will discuss the question of postponing the elections?

[Kokov] I, for one, consider that this is quite possible, bearing in mind that the very fact of regarding the decision of December of that year [1991] as being no longer valid, we recognize as legitimate only the president. And the other bodies, it seems, are not legitimate.

[Bogomolov] The arbitrariness from the legal point of view, and the obscurity and intricacy in the wording of the decisions of the State Duma make it possible to give very broad interpretations of the decisive parts of both decisions, and the opinion has been stated by Moscow Mayor Luzhkov, for example, who on the one hand says that this virtually an act of sabotage.

[Luzhkov] The actual decision of the State Duma is an absurd act of political sabotage. I would even call it an act of state sabotage because it is a state body which has adopted this decision. Now, of course, many of those who would like to enter NATO will make use of these imperialist intentions of the State Duma of the Russian Federation to spread its influence and to bring everyone back into the bosom of the Soviet Union.

They say they want to do it voluntarily, but we remember very well how voluntary it was from what happened in Central Asia, for example, which was voluntarily drawn into membership of the USSR. Prior to 1936 there were basmaks [Central Asians who opposed joining the Soviet Union] who now can be regarded among those who wanted to have freedom from this empire, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I think that now these tendencies which are linked with the bringing of NATO's borders close to Russia, they will also tend to prevail and be manifested very strongly in the world. And it will be very difficult for the president and the government of Russia to resolve problems of restraining and halting these moods which are being preached and propagated in many countries of

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eastern Europe. That is, the situation in all respects has strongly exacerbated. That is how one can regard it — as a provocation, an evil and very dangerous provocation.

[Shaymiyev] I do not rule out the possibility that the authors of the latest decisions of the State Duma are certain individuals who wish to wreck the possibility of preserving a renewed union.

[Svanidze] Do you mean some representatives of the leadership of the Communist Party?

[Shaymiyev] Yes, undoubtedly. It is well known and obvious.

[Luzhkov] Even though it has not yet achieved power, the Duma, the Communist party, has ambitions to restore of the union and all the other predilections, which are now beginning to gain the upper hand in the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] system, to bring the state back by force into the bosom of communist rule. Once again there will be a politburo, there will be a Supreme Soviet, and a Congress of People's Deputies, which will rubber stamp the appropriate decisions of the Politburo and the Central Committee of the CPRF or CPSU — I do not know what might happen there.

There will once again be ceilings which will suppress the initiative of citizens and the initiative of those who would like to work harder and so on. There will be an average wage and everything will be calm just as it was in our homeland in past years. But this calmness was connected with the loss of lives, with the loss of growth rates, it was linked with bloodshed and with the loss of the freedom which we have all now acquired and which we hardly appreciate. [end recording]

[Svanidze] Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze today visited the Federation Council, and it turned out that he was right in the thick of events.

[Begin recording] [Svanidze] Could I have literally one minute please? Eduard Amvrosiyevich, your arrival in Russia has coincided with the scandal over the decisions of the State Duma to revoke the Belovezh agreements. Has this affected the content of your visit?

[Shevardnadze] If one is to talk about the contents of the visit, very important agreements and treaties have been signed, and so this had no effect. But if one is to speak about the mood of the visit, then, naturally, this affects the mood, more in the republics than in Moscow.

[Svanidze] Did you discuss this question with President Yeltsin today?

[Shevardnadze] Yes, we discussed it seriously and I expressed serious concern and, I would say, alarm in connection with this decision which, to put it delicately, is unwise and which can only harm the natural processes of integration.

[Svanidze] You had all Russia's bodies of power on your list except for the Duma. Did you not visit the Duma? Did you not meet Seleznev?

[Shevardnadze] A meeting was planned but we made alterations, to put it mildly, we made alterations. After such a decision it would not be understood. Perhaps, it would not raise particular questions here, but in the republic, in Georgia, people would not understand if I met Seleznev, unfortunately. Although I personally respect Mr. Seleznev and I would like to meet him. Well, next time. [end recording]

[Svanidze] According to reports that we have received, some influential Communist leaders are already regretting the success of Friday's votes. Judging by everything, this whole event is the first serious tactical defeat suffered by the communists for many long months. They prepared and inflicted a blow, putting all their weight into it. But they missed. And now they must take care to keep their balance. All the best.

Russia: Federation Council Debates Duma Vote on Belovezh Accords

LD1903194396 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The center of Russia's political life has moved today to the Federation Council. Boris Yeltsin has sent an address to the senators regarding the State Duma's decision which effectively revokes the Belovezh Pushcha Agreements. The president's address says inter alia that the Duma's actions are undermining the unity of state power. Here is Yelena Kuznetsova from the conference hall.

[Begin Kuznetsova recording over video of session in progress] After having reflected on the subject for a number of hours, the deputies of the Federation Council decided that they had to consider the president's address to the upper house of parliament on the Duma's well-known decisions. Anatoliy Tyazhlov's proposal that the council should consider the postponement of the presidential elections was of special importance.

[Tyazhlov] Let us include on the agenda the issue of postponing the presidential elections in connection with the unconstitutional nature of that decision. Because at present there is just one registered presidential candidate and he is Zyuganov. Since a decision of this nature has been adopted, the question is: What sort of a country does Zyuganov want to be elected by and what sort of president does he want to be?

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[Kuznetsova] The chairman of the Committee of the Federation of Council on CIS affairs, Oleg Bogomolov, said that the State Duma's decision would provoke a negative reaction among the CIS countries and in the world community. Sergey Baburin, who spoke on behalf of the Duma, tried to explain to the deputies that the revocation of the agreements was not in fact at issue and that the president had simply been misinformed. This explanation led to a heated discussion. Some deputies were sincerely convinced that the Duma should be supported.

[Mashkovtsev, Federation Council deputy] On 17 March 1991, 75 percent of the electorate did not turn up for the vote, while all those on the voting list were in favor of the preservation of the USSR. [sentence as heard].

[Shurchanov, Federation Council deputy] The noise has been raised precisely by those who will find it to their advantage to see the presidential elections postponed.

[Kuznetsova] Some deputies insisted that this issue should be removed from the agenda, explaining their position by the fact that the documents adopted by the State Duma had no legal force. However most of the deputies who had the time to speak urged deputies not to regard the Duma's decisions as so innocuous.

[Luzhkov, Federation Council deputy] Since this is political sabotage by a state body, the State Duma, I regard it as sabotage staged against the state which aims at destroying the basis of the Russian state and its statehood.

[Galazov, Federation Council deputy] I have no doubt whatsoever that this step was prompted by a desire to earn political dividends in the preelection presidential race.

[Kuznetsov] Some deputies insisted on the fact that the Duma must cancel the decisions it had adopted.

[Titov, Federation Council deputy] Either it should revoke its decision or we, in accordance with the powers we have under the constitution, should revoke the decision by the previous Federation Council and set a new date for the presidential elections.

[Kuznetsova] As a result of the debate which went on for many hours, 116 deputies voted for the appeal which proposed that the State Duma should revise its decisions and to analyze their possible consequences. The chairman of the Federation Council, Yegor Stroyev, is convinced that the State Duma will adopt a correct legal document in the end which will remove some of the extremist provisions.

[Stroyev] I think that the Federation Council and the State Duma will have enough common sense not to let the situation become extreme because the postponement of the elections is an extreme measure needed to counter signs of stubbornness. [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin, Shevardnadze Discuss Abkhazia, NATO

LD1903162196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced that he had discussed with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze the implementation of the 1994 agreement and of another 60 accords signed afterwards.

He said some of the Russian-Georgian agreements had not been implemented, including the agreement on exporting goods to Abkhazia with Georgia's consent that was signed during the CIS summit, Yeltsin said in the Kremlin Tuesday after the signing of a Russian-Georgian declaration. Yeltsin explained this by the absence of a procedure for implementing such an agreement. "Today we have reached a general accord on the issue," said Yeltsin. "The ships transporting goods to Abkhazia will arrive at the port of Poti and, following border and customs checks, head to Abkhazia," he said.

Yeltsin thanked Georgia, and Eduard Shevardnadze personally, for supporting Russia's position on NATO's eastward expansion. "Our positions on the problem will be firm and unchangeable," he said.

Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Talks With Shevardnadze

LD1903215496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1528 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Mar (Itar-Tass) — Following summit talks with Eduard Shevardnadze, the head of the Georgian republic, in the Kremlin today, Russian President Boris Yeltsin spoke to representatives of the press. According to a report by the Russian Federation president's press service, Boris Yeltsin said:

"Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze today made his first visit to the Russian Federation as president of Georgia. Our talks were conducted in an extremely constructive spirit — on business issues alone.

In both bilateral and international relations, beginning with NATO and ending with mutual accords, our positions coincide or are at least similar. This is natural because our peoples have lived alongside one another for centuries, our peoples have had great respect for one another from the earliest of times and we are proud of our relationship.

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Of course, things are now difficult for Russia too, but perhaps, from the point of view of territorial issues, they are harder for Georgia. We devoted our meeting today to monitoring progress in implementing the treaty signed in Tbilisi in 1994 and the many (around 60) agreements signed since 1994.

Our cooperation is progressing but, unfortunately, a number of treaties have not been implemented, on both sides. We agreed today that all of the agreements signed would be fully implemented. The new foreign minister, Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov, is helping a lot in this work, as well as various departments and the Russian Government are helping. I think that we included a wide range of issues in the talks. This will aid cooperation and mutual understanding between us and the implementation of agreements signed previously.

It is very important that Georgia and Eduard Amvrosiyevich personally support our categorical opposition to the expansion of NATO eastward. This is good support for Russia's stance since our opinion on this issue is firm and unwavering.

We touched upon the problem of restructuring Georgia's debt to Russia and agreed to sign the appropriate agreement on this in a month's time.

We have long been discussing the idea of meeting in Vladikavkaz with the leaders of the Caucasian republics. But we had not reached a conclusion on whether only the Russian republics or the entire Caucasus should meet. Eduard Amvrosiyevich convinced me today that the entire Caucasus should meet in Vladikavkaz. We should discuss the prospects for peaceful coexistence by the peoples of the Caucasus. We will seek a time to hold this summit.

A few words about the recent Duma decision. It made a stupid decision which is harmful for Russia. And not only for Russia, for many states. Encroachment on the statehood of Russia can be prosecuted in line with the constitution, which is reflected in Articles 13 and 103. The Duma simply did not have the right to discuss this issue. And it has caused a fuss throughout the world. The Duma must answer for its irresponsible actions. If the heads of state agree, I am prepared to meet them and discuss the actions of the deputies."

Russia: Yeltsin, Premier Discuss Wage Arrears, Georgian Talks

LD1903163596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1559 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on Tuesday discussed the social and economic situation in the country, the wage arrears problem and the Russian-Georgian talks which Yeltsin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze held in the Kremlin on earlier today, Yeltsin's spokesman Sergey Medvedev told reporters.

Yeltsin personally controls the implementation of the plan designed to clear off the wage debts, Medvedev said.

"Every morning the President receives a report on the situation in this field," the spokesman said.

Although it very difficult to implement the plan according to schedule, it is being carried out, he said.

To this end, the government has transferred over 1.5 trillion roubles (310 million U.S. dollars) to the regions. Twenty-two components of the Russian Federation have received all the necessary sums, he said.

Russia: Upper House Discusses Possible Elections Postponement

LD1903185396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — The proposal by Moscow Governor Anatoliy Tyazhlov on possible postponement of the presidential elections voiced at the session of the Federation Council Tuesday aroused a controversial reaction in the parliamentary circles.

"It would be logical to postpone presidential elections in Russia" if the Belovezh Accords are denounced, he told Interfax, because the country will appear "in another legal space and the constitution and the established borders will be invalid.

"Under such uncertainty with statehood one cannot speak about presidential elections which, nevertheless, will be legal from the point of view of the current constitution," Tyazhlov believes.

State Duma deputy speaker Sergey Baburin opposed postponement of the presidential elections. He said in a Tuesday interview with Interfax that the aim of Yeltsin's address to the Federation Council due to effective denunciation of the Belovezh Accords by the State Duma is "to force postponement of the date of the presidential elections." The same thought, Baburin noted, was voiced in the addresses of several Federation Council members at the session of the chamber on March 19.

"There are no legislative and constitutional grounds for this move," he added.

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If the State Duma does not give any adequate answer to the address of the Federation Council, then the Duma has the right to raise the issue on postponing the presidential elections and prolonging the term of presidential authorities, said Federation Council member Nikolay Sevryugin, governor of the Tula region. The State Duma has actually initiated "an explosion in Russia and on the CIS territory" by its decision, he said in an interview with Interfax.

The Federation Council is debating two variants of its address to the State Duma due to denunciation of the Belovezh Accords. The first one expresses a protest against hastiness and flimsiness in the approach to resolving such important problems and requests that the adopted decisions be overturned.

The second variant is stated more softly and has no demand to reconsider the adopted resolutions.

Russia: Zyuganov: Upper House May Vote To Extend Yeltsin's Rule

LD1903160196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (Interfax) — Russian Communist Party (CPRF) leader Gennadiy Zyuganov, running for the Russian presidency from the national patriotic alliance, believes a motion to prolong the current Russian president's powers for yet another two years may be introduced in the Federation Council.

Such an idea has come down from the top, Zyuganov suggested at a news conference in the House of Journalists in Moscow today, claiming with reference to CPRF sources in the parliament's upper house that a proposal to put off presidential elections for two years and appropriately extend the incumbent president's powers will be made in the Federation Council by the governor of Voronezh region, one of the most influential regions in the Russian Federation.

Zyuganov linked the request to postpone the presidential elections to Yeltsin's address to the upper house in which he assessed last week's Duma decisions, actually denouncing the 1991 Belovezh Accords, as undermining the unity of the Russian Federation.

"Any attempt to postpone the presidential elections will testify to the weakness of the current regime," Zyuganov declared.

In keeping with the Russian Constitution, the date for presidential elections is fixed by the Federation Council.

Russia: Zyuganov Rejects Proposal To Extend Yeltsin Term of Office

LD1903212196 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news conference today, Gennadiy Zyuganov spoke about the main provisions of his election platform. Naturally, he spoke about the main subject of the day.

Journalists woke up when Comrade Zyuganov began to speak about the proposal by the State Duma to revoke the Belovezh Pushcha Accords. In Zyuganov's opinion, the reaction by the leaders of the country to this proposal is changing as the presidential elections approach. Here is Zyuganov about the revocation.

[Begin recording] [Zyuganov] This problem has been raised at the Duma more than a dozen times. In December more than 200 people voted for it. [words indistinct] if they had seriously been concerned about this problem they would have made it public.

[Unidentified reporter] The proposal by some senators to extend the president's term of office for another two years has not been passed unnoticed by one of the main presidential candidates. Here is Zyuganov on an extension.

[Zyuganov] From the judicial point of view, this is just unbelievable. The proposal contravenes not only the constitution but also any sensible norms. There is no precedent for this in the history of any country. [end recording]

Russia: Karachayevo-Cherkessiya Leader Wants Elections Postponed

LD1903160696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — Vladimir Khubiyev, the leader of Karachayevo-Cherkessiya, an internal Russian republic, has argued that the presidential elections, slated for June 16, should be postponed.

He said there was a need "to throw away all these elections and to gradually move forward" and for State Duma deputies "to come to their senses, to reconsider the documents adopted by them due to the anniversary of the Belovezh Accords." The 1991 Belovezh Accords, effectively denounced by the Russian State Duma on March 15, disbanded the USSR and founded the CIS.

Addressing a Federation Council session Tuesday, he explained this need by the fact that the resolutions taken

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by the State Duma are a provocation, "they destroy Russia's foundations which have just started to become established."

Russia: Yeltsin Said Not Behind Attempts To Postpone Elections

LD1903134296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1238 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Mar (ITAR-TASS) — Anatoliy Sliva, the president's representative to the Federation Council, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent that "Boris Yeltsin's administration has nothing to do with" proposals to postpone the Russian presidential elections which were expressed at the Federation Council session and in its corridors. "There is not even a hint of it" in the president's address to the Federation Council, he emphasized. Moreover, it is known that Boris Yeltsin intends to register, at the beginning of April, as a presidential candidate for the forthcoming June election.

According to the Constitution, it is up to the Federation Council and not to the president to determine the date of the elections, Anatoliy Sliva said.

The president's representative described as "bluff" the allegations that the Russian leadership is preparing "acts of force"in response to the State Duma decision proposing to revoke the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements in the section concerning the dissolution of the USSR.

Although this decision of the Duma is not legally enforceable, the Federation Council should make its assessment of it, he went on to say. First, because, according to the Constitution, the Upper Chamber must consider the ratification or annulment any international treaty. Second, the voters are entitled to an explanation because "the question is of the statehood, of tranquillity in the country". "The Duma should think about the effect that its words may have," he said.

Russia: TsIK Sees No Grounds To Cancel or Postpone Elections

LD1903181896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — There are no legal grounds to cancel or postpone next June's presidential elections, Russia's Central Electoral Commission [TsIK] secretary Aleksandr Veshnyakov told Interfax Tuesday.

"As before the parliamentary elections, the constitutional dates of the presidential elections are questioned again," he said.

Veshnyakov said he hoped that "the presidential elections will be held as envisioned by the constitution and federal laws, like the parliamentary ones."

Russia: Zyuganov Presents Election Platform

MM1903155696 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 2

["Russia, Motherland, People! Election Program of Russian Federation Presidential Candidate Gennadiy Andreyevich Zuganov" — SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA headline]

[FBIS Translated Text] Citizens of Russia, compatriots!

The time for crucial decisions has come. The fate of the Motherland for years to come depends on 16 June. On entering the struggl for the post of Russian Federation president I have a duty to tell you what prompted me to take this step.

I was born at the end of the Great Patriotic War on ravaged Orel soil. My parents were country teachers. Our entire large family worked from dawn to dusk andhonestly defended the country. I have never glorified anyone or betrayed anyone. My everyday motto is: Knowledge and action.

I am a Russian by blood and spirit; I love my Motherland. I joined the party in the belief that the communist ideal, which dates back more than 2,000 years, reflects most deeply the people's needs and aspirations. It is in tune with the age-old Russian traditions of community and collectivism and in keeping with the fundamental interests of the Fatherland.

I see the supreme point of life as being to serve Russia and its people and the ideals of good and justice. My attitude to the thousand-year history of my ancestors is one of respect. The fate of all the peoples inhabiting the expanses from the Baltic to the Pacific is close to me. I know at first hand how difficult life is for the Non-Chernozem Zone peasant, the Urals machine builder, the Kuzbass miner, the Far East seaman. I have had occasion to go almost everywhere, meet with people, help people.... But never before, even during the postwar years, have I seen so much distress or heard so many requests for help as today. Your soul aches when you see what is happening all around.

The Fatherland Is in Danger!

Our people have had to go through a great deal. But we have beaten all the troubles and misfortunes because we

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have derived strength from our attachment to our native land and our sense of Fatherland, above which there is nothing in the world. But what is happening now is the most terrifying — the primary source of the people's life forces is being hit. Their Fatherland is being taken away from them.

Let us ponder:

The Fatherland means the country, the state, the people. Where is our country today? The Soviet Union has been illegally dismembered. Some 25 million compatriots suddenly discovered they were foreigners in their own land. For the first time in their history the Russian people have become a divided people.

The Fatherland means the family, children, the continuation of the race. But mothers have been denigrated and the birth of a child threatens most families with ruin. Virtually everything which children used to have very recently has been taken away from them. Man's sacred right — the right to life — has not been safeguarded. Russia is physically dying out, losing a million souls every year!

The Fatherland means the link between generations, respect for the elderly, and concern for their material well-being, spiritual happiness, and tranquillity. Today veterans who defended the Motherland and raised it from the ruins to world heights have been abandoned to the whim of fate.

The Fatherland is an indivisible asset of the citizen. But most of the people are languishing in poverty and being forcibly prevented from enjoying the country's riches. Everything is being stolen and sent abroad by insatiable predators. The universal asset bestowed by nature — the land and its mineral resources — are also threatened.

The Fatherland means a community of people. But people cannot travel to their relations or friends for weddings or even funerals. Many people cannot afford to telephone another town, go to the theater, or buy a book.

The Fatherland means traditions, culture, and the language. But we are witnessing an unprecedented assault on the age-old spiritual values and moral ideals of our life. Inferior and second-rate standards are being instilled in the heirs of a great people. The nation is being deliberately abused. They want to remake Russia in accordance with yardsticks which are alien to it and impose a culture of greed, violence, perversion, and selfishness on it.

The Fatherland means national and state independence and respect in the world. But the country is increasingly falling into bondage and losing its allies. In the last 10 years our apologies for rulers have built up debts to last for the next 200 years. Our lands are not protected from imports of nuclear waste, junk products, "dirty" money, infectious diseases, weapons, and drugs.

So who in Rus is living a happy and free life? There is not even a Russian term for them. They are known as compradors, who are in a tiny minority. Their ideal is "tumbleweed" man, who makes his home wherever there's a profit to be made. Their objective is to remake the entire people in their own image and likeness. Their weapons are money, provocations, decadence, and lies. They want to capture us with their bare hands. It is easy to recognize them: They scornfully call our Fatherland "this country."

The People Who Are Dragging Russia Back

The present authorities claims that the Communists and their allies want to take the country back to the past. Going back there is impossible for the simple reason that we have never even emerged from there. On the contrary, we are getting stuck deeper and deeper in the worst things that existed there.

The real reforms which are vitally necessary for the country have not even started. Let us judge the "democrats" regime by its actions. What might it have done? A great deal. But what good has it done? None. Absolute power and an absolute inability to achieve anything except destruction — in this respect the regime has been consistent.

Who rules today? People from the degenerate CPSU elite, shady businessmen, corrupt officials, the inheritors of the worst traditions of the nomenklatura system. And those who continue to fight such traditions are termed "enemies of reform" who refuse to see the positive changes.

Just what are these "positive changes"? Production has fallen by half — by 80-85 percent in the sectors on which the country's scientific and technical independence depends. Capital investment in production has fallen by 75 percent. Half of the tractor and combine pool is useless. The country has more than 10 million partially or fully unemployed people, 6 million refugees, almost 1 million homeless. And it's the same everywhere.

On the other hand, they tell us, inflation and the budget deficit have fallen. This is indeed the government's "outstanding" success if you consider that it has been achieved by a method never seen before in the world — by not paying people for work and not repaying debts. This discovery should be patented.

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Having accomplished this economic feat it is possible to move on to other "achievements." They point, for example, to the full shelves in Moscow stores but "forget" to add that one-third less food is sold in the country than five years ago. The nutrition of 40 percent of the population is below minimum medical standards. For them even a glass of milk is a luxury.

Not many products, and the people's pockets are empty. Everything except vodka has gone up in price — who benefits from this? Whereas previously there was a joke about Russia that that the shelves were empty but the refrigerators were full, today everything is the other way around — the shelves are groaning but the refrigerators are empty. Indeed Russian production meets only 20 percent of consumer demand.

They say that, on the other hand, Russia now has democracy and freedom of speech but "forget" the flouted results of the referendum on retaining the Union, the repeated attempts to ban the Communist Party and other people's patriotic organizations, the tank attack on the legally elected Supreme Soviet. Thus has the immutability of the law and civil been trampled, the dignity of the court extinguished, the church denigrated, the honor of the soldier besmirched.

A state has two pillars. The people and the law. The regime has exterminated the law. To save itself it is driving the people into oppression. If there are a few political liberties in Russia it is not as a result of the goodwill of the authorities but thanks to the opposition's resistance to repression. The authorities are simply incapable of squashing the people's resistance and so they have to try to make a virtue out of necessity.

The weapons of lies are continuing to fire with increasing force. So let us be vigilant — further gullibility is fatal.

Let Us Rally Together for the Sake of the Fatherland

I can see it: The people are seeing the light and uniting. I believe it: The people will be able to seize their fate in their own hands, and rise up to their full giant stature like Vanka-Vstanka in the epic poem.

Helping them to achieve this is our main task. In recent years my concern as a citizen and a politician has been to bring all the people's patriotic forces together in a powerful alliance. To extricate Russia from its catastrophic situation peacefully, without violence or civil war. To turn the ship of state onto a course of people's power, justice, economic progress, and spiritual rebirth.

Today it can already be said that this work has borne fruit: A people's patriotic coalition has been created. In addition to the Communists and Agrarians it also includes other noncommunist and patriotic forces. We are open to new forces to whom Russia is precious and invite them into our bloc.

The people are coming to understand the thrust of our activity better and better and supported us in the elections to the State Duma and local organs of power. There is now an effective opposition active in society. It is not just sitting back and biding its time until it has all power in its hands.

In the Federal Assembly we are seeking the adoption of laws on raising the minimum wage, pensions, and grants and assigning responsibility for their nonpayment. On state support for the family, mothers and children, young people, and combating organized crime and corruption. Our initiatives are aimed at restoring state regulation and support for enterprises in the defense, energy, transport, and agro-industrial complexes and areas of the Far North.

We favor substantial changes to the legislation on privatization, the shape of the budget, currency regulation, the tax system, joint-stock companies, production cooperatives, and labor collectives.

We have forced the rulers to utter words which they had forgotten like "justice," "social protection," "strengthening of the state," "integration." But words and promises are not enough. Laws must be not only adopted but also fulfilled. What is needed is not patches over the holes or cosmetic changes to cheer up the voter but a resolute shift of all state policy in the direction of people and their everyday concerns.

Russia Will Emerge From the Crisis

Russia possesses everything it needs to emerge from the crisis and be reborn as a great power.

This includes first and foremost people endowed with natural ingenuity, industriousness, and rare patience.

It includes modern production facilities capable of competing on the world market.

It includes the richest natural resources.

It includes the spirit of our ancestors, who withstood all the blows of fate.

The main trouble is that the potential for our development, the potential of the future, is currently paralyzed or wasted. The situation is such that productive labor has become unprofitable. Mass deskilling of the work force is taking place. High-technology processes, advanced

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production facilities, and scientific schools have been put on starvation rations and cannot find employment for themselves. Natural riches are being squandered. Revenue from them is going in the wrong direction, leaking primarily abroad and working to strengthen the dollar rather than the ruble.

We will therefore all have to work in conditions of an acute shortage of time and resources. I consider that all forces must be mobilized as a matter of urgency and thrust into the decisive sectors.

First. Halting the process of Russia's extinction. Guaranteeing all citizens the right to labor, relaxation, housing, free education and medical services, and a dignified old age. Bringing wages, pensions, grants, and allowances into line with the real subsistence minimum. Compensating the population for their savings lost as a result of "reforms." Bringing state concern back to the social sphere. Housing, roads, and the provision of domestic gas supplies are a subject of special attention.

Second. Helping the family, mothers, and children in every way. Achieving a radical change in the position of women in society, exempting them from heavy work, increasing maternity leave, providing essential material support. The work of the educator, teacher, and doctor is today the leading edge of the struggle to save Russia.

Third. Ensuring priority for Russian commodity producers in all forms of ownership. Encouraging the growth of production of competitive products through the reform of tax, credit, and customs policy and large-scale state orders and investments. Doing everything to ensure that producing goods becomes much more profitable that broking and speculating. Where necessary adopting emergency measures of direct state regulation.

Fourth. Supporting the peasantry — the most important pillar of the state and repository of the people's spiritual and moral wealth. Ensuring equal conditions for all forms of land management — collective and private farms. Implementing this on the basis of peasant labor ownership, leasing, and lifetime and heritable use but without the right to the free buying and selling of land, with the exception of house, dacha, and orchard and truck garden plots. Ensuring parity of industrial and agricultural prices. Today's Mikula Selyanovich can and will feed his people.

Fifth. Saving the country's scientific, technical, and cultural potential. Rendering urgent state support to high-technology production facilities in the military-industrial complex and other sectors. Preserving public education and fundamental science, culture and art, museums and libraries, theaters and movie theaters, without which Russia has no future. Creating a state system for the encouragement of talent. Preventing a "brain drain" abroad.

Sixth. Strengthening the financial system. Using all Russia's national wealth — gold and diamonds, oil and gas, ferrous and nonferrous metals — to ensure the stability of the ruble. Restoring in full to this end the right of nationwide state ownership of the land and its resources, forests and bodies of water, and the continental shelf. We are in favor of a mixed economy. All forms of ownership which bring benefit to the Fatherland have the right to state support. Here the rights of trade unions and labor collectives to monitor and participate in the management of enterprises, irrespective of its form of ownership, will be ensured.

I stress that we are not talking about eliminating property owners but about transforming all citizens in practice into real co-owners of the nation's affluence.

Peace, Order, Security

The entire country will be reduced to ashes unless there is stable civil and inter-ethnic peace in Russia.

I for my part will do everything to end the war in Chechnya and prevent new military conflicts on the territory of Russia.

Society is a complex organism. Contradictions in it are inevitable. We will resolve them by peaceful means, within the framework of the law and on the basis of recognition of the priority of Russia's integrity and its citizens' security.

People fear that on coming to power the opposition will launch reprisals against opponents and dissidents. For the umpteenth time I earnestly state that we will support all who want to work honestly to augment the wealth of the state and their own affluence. There will be no redistribution on the basis of ideological considerations or persecution for political motives. We are resolutely opposed to repression and historical retribution. History should be studied not debunked.

Our objective is to use all the forces of society to overcome the national catastrophe and defend human rights. And this is impossible without a broad social dialogue, freedom of activity for political parties, freedom of view and faith, and freedom of information.

In the course of such a dialogue we are ready to propose a broad compromise on the basis of the recognition that nothing comes above the interests of the Fatherland and peace. The people will forgive many old transgressions to those who understand this and will work honestly for the rebirth of a great Russia.

US FOR RUSSIA — RUSSIA FOR US.

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Everybody must realize that the biggest threat to peace and the country's security lies in the deepening of the chasm between poor and rich, where a minority gets rich not by augmenting the national wealth but by robbing the majority. The further growth of group selfishness will lead to a social explosion with the most destructive consequences.

Rampant crime, particularly organized crime, poses no less a threat to the country's security. It is precisely the struggle among criminal clans to divide and redivide the spoils that is the real underlying factor behind conflicts like Chechnya. And things can also reach Russian soil. Either organized crime is suppressed or the country will disintegrate.

We want all the peoples of Russia to realize more quickly for whose selfish interests attempts are being made to set them against each other. The possibility of resolving specifically ethnic problems, of which there are also a considerable number, will then emerge.

We advocate the equality of all nations and nationalities and will defend their lawful rights, interests, and needs. The right of nations to self-determination can only by supported on the basis of a recognition of every people's responsibility for the state unity of Russia.

We advocate the abrogation of the Belovezhskaya agreements, which have brought so much suffering and sorrow to all the peoples and caused colossal damage to the republics' economies and security. Five years of this shame have shown that nobody can get out of the crisis on their own. You can't fool historical destiny. It is our political and moral right to abrogate these agreements. This does not mean that somebody is going to be forcibly annexed tomorrow. Or especially that anybody's sovereignty is going to come under attack. The right of reunification belongs to the people and them alone. We will take all the necessary measures so that fraternal ties are restored, first and foremost between Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. This will lay the foundation for the phased restoration of a union state on a voluntary basis.

Our society must be open, but without interference in internal affairs. We will pursue an independent foreign policy in keeping with the interests of the Russian state and will not shrink from dissolving unequal international treaties detrimental to the Fatherland's interests and dignity.

I will seek to safeguard Russia's external security exclusively by peaceful, political means. We are against saber rattling, the arrogant appropriation by certain given states of the functions of international gendarme, against the eastward expansion of NATO. But it is well known that you can't successfully plead for peace on bended knee. The Armed Forces will receive everything they need to reliably defend Russia's borders and its interests in the world.

The Army needs reforming. And not only organizationally and military-technically but ideologically and morally. A strong Army is an army with a Fatherland, confident in its leadership, socially protected. The country will get a military doctrine which not only guarantees national security but also reinforces the inadmissibility of the use of the Armed Forces against the people.

The entire law enforcement system and the special services need special support from the state.

Not the People for Those in Power but Power for the People

Today's "democracy" mainly boils down to the right of citizens and parties to say whatever they like and the right of the government to pay no attention. But democracy is people's power and thus responsibility to the people on the part of state organs. This is what is lacking today in all places and all things. The president and the government have no responsibility because they are not controlled and parliament because it has no rights. This kind of power cannot be strong.

It is necessary to amend the Constitution and move toward a political setup under which the president is not a czar or the "father of the nation" but the top official serving the state and controlled by and accountable to people's representatives.

No minister must be appointed without the agreement of the legislative branch. No Russia-wide program will start until it obtains the agreement of parliament and the Higher Intellectual Council. For their part parliament and deputies must be under the control of and accountable to the voters. We will ensure regular elections to all organs of power from top to bottom.

I will take measures to resolutely combat corruption in the state apparatus. The people's control of its activity will be restored. Moral criteria will assume top priority in policy. Organizing life in accordance with truth, conscience, and justice will become the main objective of the state.

We will ensure citizens' right to honest statistics. All sociopolitical forces operating within the law will have access to the state mass media.

Without a Strong State There Is No Such Thing as a Strong Russia

The historical and geopolitical features of our Fatherland predetermined a most important role for the state.

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There is no longer anyone to assume concern for the defense industry, the power industry, transport, communications, the environment, and a great deal else. Defending the country, protecting nature, teaching children, healing the sick, helping the weak, combating the criminal, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all citizens — this is the role of the state. But it not its role to bully, give orders, or spawn parasites. We are convinced from bitter experience that universal state control sooner or later becomes a brake on progress.

The essence of my strategy is to provide maximum scope for all citizens' creative energy, initiative, and enterprise. The state is not a "philanthropist" bestowing manna from heaven on its subjects. It is obliged to act in such a way that nobody can prevent people working freely, owning the fruits of their labor, and independently deciding their own fate.

We will ensure the conditions necessary for this. They are simple and clear:

— power will be returned to the people;

— it will become profitable to produce goods, build, and learn;

— the worker will have guaranteed work, be paid according to his labor, and participate in the management of production;

— the peasant will become master on his own land and receive the necessary support from the state;

— the teacher, doctor, engineer, scientist, artist, writer, and sportsman will regain a sense of their significance in society;

— women will be in a position to raise their children in peace and will be confident about their future;

— children will be given back everything that has been taken from them;

— the school and college student will get the opportunity to study at no cost and relax properly;

— talent will not be left without state support;

— the policeman, prosecutor, and judge will protect the honest person and will themselves be protected by the law;

— the soldier will receive everything necessary and will concern himself with his most immediate job — defending the Fatherland;

— the veteran, invalid, and sick person will be socially protected and surrounded by attention and concern;

— the security of society, the family, and the individual and freedom of speech and public activity will be guaranteed;

— refugees will finally acquire a home in Russia;

— the duped investor will get his savings back;

— the thief will be put in jail.

Our objective is freedom and justice. If state power ensures this, free people in a free country will do all the rest themselves, without being told or coerced.

I believe that this is how it will be. I believe in the wisdom and common sense of our great people. I believe that at the elections the people will vote:

For peace against civil war!
For honest labor against parasites!
For law and order against tyranny and violence!
For the friendship and brotherhood of the peoples against hatred and malice!
For truth and purity against lies and perversion!
For the people's power!
For the honesty and dignity of the Russian state [derzhava]!

Russia: Fedorov Announces Intention Not To Run for President

LD1903214396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1733 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Mar 19 (Interfax) — Forward Russia! movement leader Boris Fedorov has announced his "firm intention" not to run for the Russian presidency in June. In a statement issued Tuesday he thanked "all who put forward his candidacy and collected signatures in his support."

According to him, "Unfortunately, Russia today is not prepared for a leap to the future and we will again have to choose the lesser evil.

"It would be very sad if democratic candidates, who stand poor chances, take votes from each other and as a result we have to choose between Zyuganov and Zhirinovskiy," reads the statement.

"Today it is clear that one must give up personal ambitions for the sake of the country's interests," Fedorov said. He called on Yegor Gaydar, Svyatoslav Fedorov, Viktor Chernomyrdin, Galina Starovoytova and other "moderate and democratically-minded politicians to firmly and unambiguously state their refusal to participate in the presidential elections as candidates in order not to collect signatures in vain and not to confuse people.

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"It is necessary to support candidates who will not let the country be turned backwards and who stand a good chance of winning," said Fedorov.

Russia: Naina Yeltsin Interviewed on Life With President

964F1451A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian Mar 96 No 11, p 3

[Interview with Naina Yeltsina by ARGUMENTY I FAKTY staff members at the ARGUMENTY I FAKTY editorial office in Moscow; date not given: "Naina Yeltsina: 'Russia Is Being Built and Is Alive'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Interest in presidents' spouses is always great. How is life treating the "first lady," and can her concerns be compared in any way with the concerns of simple women? Who steers the "family ship"? Is she a "secret adviser" to her husband?

When Naina Iosifovna Yeltsina accepted our invitation to visit our editorial office and that visit took place, we naturally deluged her with a pile of questions. She responded to them very frankly and sincerely.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Naina Iosifovna, if you please, answer the most pressing question: Did Boris Nikolayevich have any hesitations as to whether to advance his candidacy or not?

[Yeltsina] I am sure that there was some hesitation, but I tried not to discuss that topic with him. One time I was asked in Ryazan, "Would you like for the president to run?" I answered: "If you are asking me as a wife, then of course not."

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] In our editorial office there are many journalists who are not originally from Moscow. And we decided to send them on a business trip to their native parts, so that they could meet with their relatives and have a heart-to-heart talk with them. The picture in many places is a gloomy one. And people will vote for whomever, just so there might be an improvement.

[Yeltsina] Of course, this is a difficult time, but after all, people have been given the right to make a choice! This is the main thing. It is another matter that we are not prepared to take handle this freedom. But one has to realize that at some stage it is important simply to survive.

Remember, previously it was hard to buy a refrigerator or a washing machine in our country, and an iron—even those could only be gotten with special coupons... I remember all that very well. One could only "snag" one, or request one in humiliating fashion. And now there is plenty of everything—isn't that what we dreamed of before?

If the local authorities are not engaged in the structure of people's lives, the president by himself cannot do anything. There are many regions where the progress has been outstanding. And there are places where there are many enterprises of the military-industrial complex, and things are very bad there. Before, they had always been given the green light all the way. They lived in hothouse conditions. But now the military-industrial complex is not necessary on such a scale. And many people have remained standing at the broken feeding-trough! They are embittered, and they want to go back to the past, because at one time they were the elite.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But the reforms should have been prepared for in the beginning!

[Yeltsina] Then the reforms would never have been begun!

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] There are many who believe that only a handful of people have become rich, and that massive layer that has not found itself in the reforms will willy-nilly be drawn back and will lead to the victory of the Communists.

[Yeltsina] It is hard to believe that the majority of the people want to go back to ration cards, to empty shelves and lines. I read somewhere that about 40 percent of the population has begun to live better over the past two years. If in the next two years just 30 percent more begin to live better, that will be the solution to the problem! If only a few people had improved their living conditions here, then the market would have collapsed long ago. Look what a huge number of stores has appeared here. And they are not empty. In the stores I see pension-age ladies who are counting every ruble, but they can still buy something. It is another matter that these people should at this stage have particular social protection. But we still do not have enough money for it! If we had taken on the country in 1991 with an abundance, with a full treasury, then we would have no problems now. Boris Nikolayevich said recently: Our state money-box has been replenished with the first contributions to the treasury. Despite the colossal debts, we now have a gold reserve. All our life, we purchased grain abroad. And it turns out that we did not have to buy it in such quantities! Last year we had a bad harvest. But did anyone feel this? Were there bread lines anywhere? The problems are being solved, but no one notices this.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But you probably understand that, under the cannonade of the war in Chechnya, he will not necessarily win in the elections.

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[Yeltsina] I understand that this is a stumbling block. My heart is torn apart when the blood flows...

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Do you feel that there are many dissatisfied people in this country?

[Yeltsina] There have always been dissatisfied people, and there will be, in the most prosperous of conditions. But it is difficult now. Of course there are dissatisfied people. One time we traveled to Vladimir, and we were there at the cathedral. And a very elderly man said to Boris Nikolayevich: "You gave us freedom, and we should not ask you for money. As much as I want, that is how much I earn. Do not believe those people who say that life has now become impossible; they just do not want to work."

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But there are people who do work and do not receive their wages...

[Yeltsina] I do not understand our government and the president; why can't they trace the movement of money and punish those who hold back wages? Yes, it is necessary to punish those directors who do not pay. If you do not know how to pay wages, then leave.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] A very difficult election campaign lies ahead. What, in your view, must be done in order that your husband be in normal physical shape?

[Yeltsina] But he is in good physical shape now. Yes, he has had two heart attacks, but there were no operations on his heart. These are the wages of the enormous stress he has been under all these years. In general, a leader of such rank needs to be colder, more detached, perhaps. But he runs everything through his heart. Have you ever once heard him say, "What do I have to do with it..."? He takes everything upon himself.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] A person in power is perceived to be a machine, who can neither fall ill nor feel. Our people, too, perceive the president to be more of a model, a symbol.

[Yeltsina] His whole life is work. During the first years of our life together, I often thought: Lord, why so much happiness for one person—me? I was shy, but I also rejoiced—in the purity of our relations, in his concern. But when he became a leader (head of a construction section, and then of a building construction combine), I stopped seeing him at home. His style of life changed drastically. It reached the point of the absurd. We already had two children, we had lived for five years in the same building, but I... was considered a single mother. Once we went to a restaurant for a family dinner, and the next morning the old ladies said to me: "Sweetie, we are so glad that you have finally gotten married, and you have such a good husband. How he was smiling at your daughters!" I looked at them without understanding a thing: "What husband, what daughters? That is their papa!"

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But did you never want to divorce your husband?

[Yeltsina] That was never even in my thoughts. And I do not think it was in his. But I will ask him, just in case. We never quarreled—even our children were surprised at that. Why? I cannot quarrel with him. He always finds the right words, convinces me to change my mind. And in such a way that I won't resent it. Of course, I have resented things, been dissatisfied with things: He has always been very urbane in company, has not stinted on the compliments to the women. And they have always paid attention to him.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] If Boris Nikolayevich is a wise husband and father, can he listen to women's logic, to women's intuition?

[Yeltsina] It has always seemed to me that his intuition is much richer than, for example, mine. And that he has a very acute mind. I just begin to speak—and he finishes my sentence. He knows what I wanted to say... I sometimes get flustered. And I always listen to him.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Tell us, does the family criticize Boris Nikolayevich?

[Yeltsina] Of course, we in the family act as a "loyal opposition." We take a critical approach to each step of his, any speech. Boris Nikolayevich is not a man with whom one could unceremoniously, straight off, discuss complicated, painful topics. He does not like it when people try to "influence" him. It has always been that way.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] As soon as the election campaign began, we began to see the president on the television screen every day. It seems that he gets mobilized only when the question of power is being decided?

[Yeltsina] Now the election campaign is under way, and naturally he must appear before the people more often. But when the country is living in its normal working rhythm, Boris Nikolayevich does not support the idea of the first personage of the state constantly flashing across the television.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Do you ever have occasion, Naina Iosifovna, to discuss money matters with your husband? In general, does a money problem exist for you?

[Yeltsina] Money was never of paramount importance in our family life. I never asked, for instance, how much

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he would make at a new job. Sometimes there were comical instances: He could receive a prize and put it in the pocket of his coat, and I would find it when I was getting things together to take to the dry cleaner. Although, naturally, there was never enough money, and we had to borrow.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Is it hard to be the president's wife?

[Yeltsina] I would not wish it on any woman. Although, yes, "the president's wife" sounds lovely... Of course, Boris Nikolayevich will not hold this post forever. But my attitude toward the wife of the future president, whoever he is, will be one of pity and understanding. I know what a heavy burden that is.

The president has done an enormous amount of heavy work for Russia. He took on the country with an empty treasury. No rights, no law. How much strength and energy it has taken to raise it up! All that took place before my eyes. And now they are slandering him from all sides, everyone wants to "steer" him. But he never answers evil for evil. "I," he says, "will never be besmirched with this filth."

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Tell us, do your friends from Yekaterinburg often harass you with any kind of requests?

[Yeltsina] No. They understand everything perfectly.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Do you have close women friends?

[Yeltsina] Unfortunately, my way of life is a domestic one. I have no close women friends in Moscow. When I go to my native city, I try to call my women friends from my old workplace at the design institute. For my birthday, they sent me a tape—they recorded their poetry and congratulations. I began to listen for the first time, and started to cry. Now when things get hard for me, I put on that tape. I cry a little—pardon my frankness—and I feel better. I hear the dear voices of people whom I worked with for 30 years. I do not have that here.

I call my sister often. But my main support are my two grown daughters. They can feel it when I am not having an easy time of it. We have been very lucky with our girls... Probably they, like all daughters, are in love with their father. Especially since they see me incomparably more often. They see him rarely. But I am not jealous. When he is very busy, I buy presents on his behalf. He loves to give presents, surprises for our daughters and grandchildren.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] What do your daughters do professionally?

[Yeltsina] The elder graduated from the construction department, and the younger from Moscow State University's department of computer mathematics and cybernetics. Our younger daughter and her family live with us, and the elder, separately.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] What did the children give him for his 65th birthday?

[Yeltsina] The girls gave him a warm, comfortable shirt, which he wears at home. The grandchildren themselves drew and made a surprise calendar. Tear off a page, and you see how many days are left till the elections.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Does he watch television?

[Yeltsina] Very rarely. I or the children tell him about what we see on the news. We begin to retell him the events, and he already knows it. He wakes up at about five o'clock in the morning, sits in his chair, and looks through his documents and newspapers.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Do you often go outside just to relax or to go somewhere for fun?

[Yeltsina] No. I am ashamed to admit it, but sometimes I don't even know what the weather is like outside. Calls and letters take up an enormous amount of time. Many people write to me, but I cannot answer them all. It has been suggested that I take on a reader, a secretary, to help me. But I should not replace the Health Care Ministry or the Social Protection Ministry with my activity. Although I do try to participate in the solution of individual problems.

I am often approached with proposals to personally head a charitable organization, to organize a foundation. But I will never organize any foundation. I simply try to use my meetings with business people for the organization of aid to orphanages and hospitals. For example, I was able to come to an agreement with one German firm on financial assistance to a hospital that needs special equipment. According to the agreement, the firm pays for the equipment. The hospital receives it. I have absolutely no contact with that money.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Do you interact directly with the ministers? With whom specifically?

[Yeltsina] I interact with ministers extremely rarely. I make their acquaintance mostly only at official receptions. But I know the ministers of education, health care, and social protection personally.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Naina Iosifovna, after all, it is difficult not to acknowledge that people have begun to build expensive housing—take a look at the Moscow area. The cities are being transformed, there is everything in the stores. Even though it is happening

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slowly, life is moving toward the better. Tell us, what do you dream about, what do you rejoice in?

[Yeltsina] I want to see life getting better here. Better than in the West, better than in the East. Better in our own way. We have earned this through our patience. The country has earned it through its whole history. I rejoice that Russia, still and all, is being built and is alive.

Russia: MVD Reports Data on Operations, Chechnya Included

MM1903153696 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Lieutenant Colonel Vasiliy Panchenkov: "Fight Against Crime: Facts and Figures"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A briefing for Russian and foreign journalists was held in the Russian MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) Internal Troops Separate Operational Division.

In 1995 operational combined units and military units carried out 1,228 patrol and sentry duty missions and 222 missions to ensure public safety during mass measures, and 520 missions jointly with internal affairs organs during the implementation of complex operations. During the missions over 27,000 citizens were arrested for various offenses, including 898 for crimes. During the measures being carried out 1,725 firearms and 536 nonfirearms, over 300,000 rounds of various ammunition, 2,362 explosive devices, and over 27 kg of narcotics were confiscated....

Special motorized military units carried out over 13,000 patrol and sentry duty missions, ensured the implementation of 1,218 mass measures, and participated in 121 complex operations jointly with internal affairs organs. A considerable proportion of operational troops and motorized military units' troops are implementing a range of measures to ensure the population's safety and restore law and order in the Chechen Republic.

Since 11 December 1994 Internal Troops servicemen have taken 1,978 firearms, 87 guns, 631 mortars and grenade launchers. One hundred thirty-five self-propelled artillery guns, 225 other armored vehicles, over 1 million cartridges and 35,000 artillery shells, 6,106 grenades, 5,612 mines and explosive devices, 8,338 launcher-fired projectiles, and over 4,000 kg of explosives out of criminal circulation in the combat operations zone in Chechnya.

Four hundred twenty-three servicemen have died and 1,928 have been wounded fighting bandits in the Chechen Republic. One hundred fifty-seven Internal Troops servicemen are missing.

When answering journalists' questions about events in Groznyy in recent days, Lieutenant General Viktor Gafarov, first deputy commander of Russian MVD Internal Troops, on the whole gave a positive assessment of Internal Troops' actions. He believes that Dudayev's supporters will no longer be able to mount any large-scale operations like the latest one in Groznyy because federal troops have inflicted serious damage on them. Had the federal command not cared about saving peaceful inhabitants' lives and had they used aviation and heavy armor in Groznyy from the outset, Gafarov stressed, Dudayev's supporters could have been finished off within a day.

Russia: Details, Commentary on Attack on CBR Chairman's Home

MM1903163796

[FBIS Report] Moscow IZVESTIYA and KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian both front-page in their 20 March editions stories on the 18 March shooting incident at Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin's Moscow apartment.

The IZVESTIYA feature, carried under the headline "Central Bank of Russia [CBR] Boss' Apartment Shot At", reads in full:

"Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin's apartment, which is located in a permanently guarded building on Protochnyy Lane (downtown Moscow) was shot at 2110 hours on Monday [18 March]. The Moscow FSB [Federal Security Service] Directorate and the city prosecutor's office and police are investigating, our correspondent Grigoriy Punanov reports.

"Three bullets from a 'TT' pistol, one of which was embedded in a ceiling, were discovered in the apartment; four cartridges from the same weapon were found in the street. None of the people who were in the apartment were hurt. Dubinin himself was not in the apartment.

"Meanwhile Association of Russian Banks (ARB) President Sergey Yegorov told our correspondent Sergey Leskov that the Central Bank (and its boss) may have aroused the displeasure of criminal structures first and foremost because it is constantly revoking the licenses of commercial banks which have broken the regulatory rules. In addition, the Central Bank is linked to the commercial banks by many other threads, particularly granting them credit, authorizing currency operations, and so forth."

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA report, by Yelena Lorin and Igor Pankov, includes the following on the reaction of the Central Bank and ARB press services:

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"The Central Bank Press Service refused to comment on what had happened: 'We ourselves heard about this from the radio.' But the view at the ARB is that this shooting is a extraordinary event. In the words of ARB Press Secretary Aleksandr Zagryadskiy, 'an attack on a major state official is the absolute limit.' 'Criminal groupings have long been attempting to establish control over the banks, but they have now evidently switched to a new stage when state officials working in the economic sphere are also in danger.'

"To a question as to whether the attempt on Dubinin is not linked to the Central Bank's withdrawal of licenses from many commercial banks, Zagryadskiy said: 'I am fearful of making any supposition. Although, of course, an official of such rank comes into conflict with various financial structures.'"

Russia: Bomb Found on Bus Puts Moscow Police on High Alert

MK1903131896 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 6

[Report by Artem Vetrov: "Five Kilograms of Explosive in a Moscow Ikarus Bus: A Chechen Trail or an Exercise by Special Services?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Yesterday law enforcement representatives refused to comment or even assess the incident. Moreover, it was not clear under which article [of the Criminal Code] a criminal case would be opened or who would handle it. According to preliminary data, this will apparently be [on charges of] terrorism (Article 213-3 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code) while, strange as it might be, police investigators will have to deal with it.

It is noteworthy that the bomb was discovered literally hours after Dudayev announced that his supporters were switching to new methods and forms of struggle against the Russian authorities. Possibly the bomb in Kuntsevo [western district in Moscow] was the first manifestation of these "new methods," prepared in advance. Even so, some strange aspects of the terrorist act are striking. In particular it is not clear why the terrorists left so much time before the explosion, allowing Russian special services at least three hours to detect the mine (it should be noted that it was very easy to plant the mine: Simply drop the package behind a bus seat). In this context the terrorist act this past Sunday [17 March] strongly recalls a series of explosions at the close of 1994, when for no apparent reason somebody twice blew up the Moscow circle railway line and an empty city bus, doing everything possible to avoid casualties or serious consequences.

Be that as it may, as of this weekend all Moscow law enforcement agencies have been put on high alert.

Russia: Statute on Yeltsin Emissaries in Parliament

MM2003100696 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 5

[Russian Federation Presidential Edict No. 351 signed by President Yeltsin on 9 March 1996: "On the Russian Federation President's Plenipotentiary Representatives to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Chambers"; accompanied by the statute on the same]

[FBIS Translated Text] With a view to ensuring the effectiveness of the legislative process and coordinating the activity of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff subunits and federal executive organs, I decree that:

1. It shall be laid down that the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council and the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma in conjunction with Russian Federation presidential aides under the procedure laid down by the Russian Federation president shall coordinate work in the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council and the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma, the Russian Federation Presidential Staff subdivisions, and with representatives of the Russian Federation Government.

2. The appended statute on the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly chambers is hereby ratified.

3. Working staffs of the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly chambers with a complement of up to 10 people each shall be set up within the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin

[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin, 9 March 1996
No. 361

Statute on the Russian Federation President's Plenipotentiary Representatives to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Chambers

I. General Provisions

1. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council and the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Russian

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Federation Federal Assembly State Duma (hereinafter, the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers) ensure representation of the Russian Federation president's interests and promote the implementation of his constitutional powers in the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council and the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma respectively (hereinafter, the Federation Council and State Duma respectively).

2. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers are guided in their activities by the Russian Federation Constitution, federal laws, Russian Federation presidential edicts and directives, and this statute.

3. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers take part in sessions of the Federation Council and State Duma respectively without any special authorization being required from the Russian Federation president. Other Russian Federation presidential representatives on issues being examined by the Russian Federation Federal Assembly chambers (hereinafter, the Federal Assembly chambers) are appointed by Russian Federation presidential directives.

4. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers are appointed and dismissed by the Russian Federation president following representations from the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers are ex-officio deputy leaders of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

II. Functions of the Plenipotentiary Representatives

5. On behalf of the Russian Federation president the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers:

— submit to sessions of the corresponding Federal Assembly chamber draft federal constitutional laws submitted by the Russian Federation president on the revision of the provisions of the Russian Federation Constitution and the inclusion of amendments to it;

— submit to sessions of the corresponding Federal Assembly chamber other draft laws and amendments to draft laws submitted by the Russian Federation president which are under examination by the chambers, as well as appeals from the Russian Federation president to the Federal Assembly and its chambers;

— submit at sessions of the corresponding Federal Assembly chamber the Russian Federation president's grounds for rejecting adopted federal laws;

— recruit by agreement with the corresponding Federal Assembly chamber officials from the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, the Russian Federation Government, and drafters of bills, academics, and experts to present to the chamber draft laws submitted by the Russian Federation president;

— take part in shaping the plans for draft legislative work, as well as proposals for the agenda of the corresponding chamber's sessions.

6. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Federation Council submits to the Federation Council on instructions from the Russian Federation president:

— Russian Federation presidential edicts on the imposition of martial law and the declaration of states of emergency submitted for ratification in accordance with Article 102 Paragraphs b and c of the Russian Federation Constitution;

— candidates proposed by the Russian Federation president for the posts listed in Article 83 Paragraph f of the Russian Federation Constitution.

7. At sessions of the corresponding Federation Council committees the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the Federation Council, on instructions from the Russian Federation president, submits the candidates proposed by the Russian Federation president for the positions listed in Article 83 Paragraph l of the Russian Federation Constitution.

8. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representative to the State Duma, on instructions from the Russian Federation president, submits to the chamber the candidates proposed by the Russian Federation president for the positions listed in Article 83 Paragraphs a, d, and l of the Russian Federation Constitution.

9. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers coordinate their activities in carrying out the functions assigned to them.

III. Rights of the Plenipotentiary Representatives

10. The Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers are entitled in carrying out the functions assigned to them:

— to coordinate the draft normative acts proposed for submission on the Russian Federation president's behalf to the corresponding Federal Assembly chamber;

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— to take part in the preparation of proposals for the Russian Federation president on the signing or rejection of adopted federal laws;

— to obtain the necessary conclusions, material, and information from Russian Federation Presidential Staff subunits and from federal executive organs;

— to set up expert and working groups in certain areas of their activity, and to recruit academics and experts, including on a contract basis, to help to implement their functions;

— to make use under the established procedure of the information data bases of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff, the Russian Federation Government Apparatus, federal executive organs, and Russian Federation component organs of state power.

IV. Ensuring the Activity of the Plenipotentiary Representatives

11. The activity of the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers is supported by their working staffs, which have the status of independent departments of the Russian Federation presidential main administrations.

12. The working staffs of the Russian Federation president's plenipotentiary representatives to the Federal Assembly chambers:

— ensure cooperation between the plenipotentiary representatives and relevant chamber committees, as well as with State Duma factions and groups of deputies;

— draw up proposals and recommendations for the plenipotentiary representatives;

— ensure cooperation between the plenipotentiary representatives and subunits of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff and Russian Federation Government Apparatus with a view to supporting draft laws submitted by the Russian Federation president and implementing the Russian Federation president's legislative initiatives.

The structure and staffing of the plenipotentiary representatives' working staffs and the representatives' expenditure estimates are ratified by the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff.

13. The leaders of the plenipotentiary representatives' working staffs and their employees are appointed and dismissed by the leader of the Russian Federation Presidential Staff following representations from the plenipotentiary representatives.

Military Issues

Russia: Barents Sea Naval Exercises Detailed

MM2003121496 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Gundarov: "'Battle' in Barents Sea"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bilateral exercises aimed at inspecting the Northern Fleet's real combat readiness started in the fleet Monday [18 March] for the first time following a long gap. A multipurpose carrier group led by the flagship, the aircraft-carrying cruiser Admiral Flota Sovetskogo Soyuza Kuznetsov, is fighting on the side of the "blues" against three dozen "red" surface ships and submarines.

On the first day of the exercise the carrier group rebuffed a raid by missile-armed naval aircraft, thus confirming specialists' long-held view regarding the Russian aircraft carrier's invulnerability from the air. Whereas the aircraft were also Russian, the nuclear submarines were foreign. Unwanted guests were detected by the ASW ships of a brigade under the command of Captain First Rank Nikolay Skok, and the foreigners were subsequently cleared from the exercise area.

During the exercises, led by Admiral Oleg Yeforeyev, commander of the Northern Fleet, over 400 combat drills involving missile, torpedo, and artillery weapons will be carried out. Aviation units from the combined air defense unit commanded by Major General of Aviation Nikolay Danilov are taking part in the "battles" in the Barents Sea and Kola Peninsula in conjunction with the forces of the Northern Fleet. The exercises will last until 23 March.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma To Review Belovezh Vote in Factions

LD2003110096 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1000 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputies of the State Duma have decided to examine in factions and deputies' groups the Federation Council's message requesting it to review the decisions on the effective annulment of the Belovezh Agreements. Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev said copies of the shorthand account of the debate on this issue in the Federation Council will also be sent to the factions. After the Federation Council's message has been discussed in the factions, a decision will be made on whether this issue should be examined at a plenary sitting of the Duma.

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Russia: Shokhin Calls For Revote on CIS Denunciation

LD1903162096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (INTERFAX) — The executive council of the Russian State Duma voted down a proposal by Duma First Deputy Speaker Aleksandr Shokhin of the progovernment Russia Is Our Home faction that the Duma take another look at their resolution to effectively denounce the 1991 Belovezh Accords dissolving the Soviet Union. Shokhin told Interfax in a Tuesday interview that the document had been changed since the vote took place.

Shokhin said that Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev signed the resolution Tuesday morning only after "significant" technical and legal changes to the document, including a change in the title.

This is sufficient grounds for another vote, Shokhin said.

Vice speakers of both houses of parliament met Monday night to search for a way to dodge the approaching confrontation, Shokhin said. According to this compromise, the Federation Council will officially ask the Duma to reconsider the document, which revoked a 1991 Russian Supreme Soviet decision to denounce the 1922 agreement forming the USSR. "In this way the Duma may be able to resolve the unconstitutional aspects of its earlier decision," said Shokhin.

"Ideally, the Duma would cancel its own decision," Shokhin said.

Russia: Federation Council Adopts Appeal to Duma To Reconsider

LD1903153196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1515 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 March (ITAR-TASS) — The appeal adopted by the Federation Council today proposes returning to the consideration of the decision adopted by the State Duma on 15 March, and "making another thorough analysis of the possible consequences of the adoption of that decision." The appeal is the result of a discussion that went on in the upper house for many hours on the documents of the State Duma entitled "On the deepening of the integration of the peoples forming the USSR and the annulment of the decision of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet of 12 December 1991" and "On the judicial force in the Russian Federation of the results of the USSR referendum of 17 March 1991 on the question of the preservation of the USSR."

The appeal was adopted by 116 members; 10 were against and three deputies abstained.

Russia: Upper House Speaker Says Duma Decision 'Ill-Considered'

LD1903155096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (INTERFAX) — Yegor Stroyev, speaker of Russia's Federation Council, described the decision of Russia's State Duma on effective denunciation of the 1991 Belovezh Accords as "uncalculated, unbalanced and ill-considered."

"In any case, this is not the best variant to solve such disputable political issues," he told journalists in Moscow Tuesday.

Stroyev assumed that the State Duma will reconsider its decision and will adopt "a correct legal act" which "will cancel several extremist provisions of this document (of the State Duma resolution dated March 15 - INTERFAX).

"We shall find a balanced way to resolve this problem" after the meeting between the Federation Council delegation and the State Duma leadership, Stroyev believes.

Now there is no subject for a request to the Constitutional Court due to this decision of the parliament lower chamber, according to Stroyev.

Russia: Seleznev Defends Duma Decision on Belovezh

LD1903201196 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Federation Council adopted the appeal to the State Duma about two hours ago. Nevertheless, in the afternoon Gennadiy Seleznev told journalists that if he was to consider again the decisions revoking the Belovezh agreements, he would once more vote in favor of the decisions.

Having met the Vesti film crew after the talks with the Greek foreign minister, Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev said right away that he knew nothing about what was going on at the Federation Council. He said he had more serious engagements during the day than to follow the session of his colleagues at the Federation Council. Yet, he did not refuse to express his attitude towards what is going on and described the documents adopted by the Duma as having no legal basis.

[Begin Seleznev recording] This document is of a civic and political nature. From the point of view of its contents, it is a statement for which 250 deputies voted, and we do not cherish any desire to give it any legal force. [end recording]

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Seleznev stressed that from the start of the Chechen war, the Duma has been adopting such documents, and everything has always been calm. He believes that the situation should be calm now, too. The Duma speaker categorically denied that the Duma decisions undermined cooperation between CIS countries.

[Begin Seleznev recording] One can see in it what one wants. If somebody wants to see military actions in these decisions, as [Kazakh President] Nursultan Nazarbayev stated, he can find them there. But the deputies were absolutely sincere in their desire to see their decisions as opening up a concrete real path towards active integration. [end recording]

Seleznev explained the negative reaction of the Russian president by the fact that Boris Yeltsin had poor advisers, and described the utterances by the leaders of the commonwealth as an old party habit.

[Begin Seleznev recording] The former politburo are acting just the way they used to. When the general secretary told them what to do, they followed. Former member of the politburo Nazarbayev, former member of the politburo Aliyev, former member of the politburo Shevardnadze — how can they assess a document which they have not seen? Tell me. [end recording]

But Gennadiy Seleznev is convinced nevertheless that the dissolution of the Duma and the postponement of the June elections mentioned by Boris Yeltsin will not be among the negative consequences of the documents adopted.

Russia: Zyuganov Stresses Peaceful Intentions

LD1903182896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gennadiy Zyuganov's press conference today was reminiscent of an underground party gathering. As the result of an accident, all the lights in Journalists' House were turned off and candles were the only source of light, creating a really gloomy atmosphere. This developed in particular when the situation regarding today's sitting of the Federation Council was discussed. Gennadiy Zyuganov suggested that it might discuss extending the Russian president's term of office by a further two years.

[Begin Zyuganov recording] This idea has been threatened and, moreover, threatened by the head of administration of a major Region. [end recording]

Zyuganov thinks that the issue of postponing the elections is linked to Boris Yeltsin's appeal to parliament's upper chamber in which he assessed the resolution adopted by the Duma on the annulment of the Belovezh Pushcha agreements as undermining Russia's state power.

All the same, Gennadiy Zyuganov was less categorical today than last Friday [15 March, the day the Duma passed the resolution].

[Begin Zyuganov recording] No one has encroached upon anyone's sovereignty nor are they intending to. I understand very well that you can't make friends by force. [end recording]

Gennadiy Zyuganov insisted on the historical importance of the decision that has been taken. Noting in particular the date the vote took place, the communists' leader recalled historical parallels.

[Begin Zyuganov recording] On 15 March Tsar Nicholas renounced the throne which entailed serious consequences. On 15 March the first and last president of the USSR, Gorbachev, came to power. And on 15 March the last aspen stake was driven into the Belovezh Pushcha agreements. Whatever attempts there may to deny this, nevertheless the people's elected representatives who had the relevant mandate relied on the will of the citizens and expressed their attitude. All future and present history will have to take account of this attitude. [end recording]

As for the possibility of a violent resolution of the quarrel between the president and the Duma, Gennadiy Zyuganov could not today provide any serious proof of this. He just noted philosophically that this time common sense would triumph.

Vadim Glusker and Nikolay Yakushev for the NTV TV company.

Russia: Duma Decree on USSR Seen as Move To Provoke Yeltsin

MK1903132596 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Marina Shakina: "A Preelection War of Nerves Is Unfolding in Russia. Zyuganov Has Hinted at Kremlin Plans To Introduce a State of Emergency; Yeltsin Has Denied This Possibility"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Observers of the Russian political process clearly underestimated the Communist-inspired Duma decree overturning the renunciation of the 1922 Union Treaty at the time of its passage. After a few days it is becoming clear that the Duma's pro-Communist majority did not adopt it off the cuff: The seed fell on well-prepared, both public and political,

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soil. The fact is not only that in the run-up to the elections the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] has to deliver on at least some of its December promises, as it appeared initially, nor simply "to create vibrations in the air." This was preceded by apparently painstaking work with the masses and leaders of Communist "communities" in Russia's regions and the near abroad. As if on cue, on 16-18 March rallies were held and statements in support of the restoration of the Soviet Union were heard. A small (1,500-3,000 participants) but belligerent rally took place in Moscow. Reports of similar actions came from Tatarstan and Crimea. Leftist movements in Donbass called on the Ukrainian Government to more actively join in Commonwealth activities. Belarusian Communists expressed their "profound satisfaction" with the Russian parliamentarians' decision.

No matter how emphatically Moscow officials might stress the legal invalidity of the Duma decree, life in the post-Soviet space proceeds far from legislative schemes. There is an obvious strong public reaction threatening the CIS republics (to varying degrees) with political destabilization.

The gist of the strong reaction is twofold: The Duma decree has aroused super-expectations and false hopes among some and a "union-phobia" with respect to Russia among others. The situation in each republic is quite typical: The authorities have condemned the Duma action. For example, Georgian Parliament Speaker Zurab Zhaniay said: "The only outcome of the State Duma decision will be that we shall continue to treat the integration process within the CIS framework with suspicion."

The strongest reaction has come from Ukraine: Christian Democratic Party Chairman Vitaliy Zhuravskiy said that Ukraine has thus been prompted to join NATO.

As concerns the internal political situation in Russia, it has definitely heated up: There has been an exchange of propaganda strikes. Yeltsin, confronted with many additional difficulties and problems as a result of the Duma decision, primarily in the foreign policy sphere, shot back, charging the Communists with a secret intention to disrupt the presidential elections.

Sober analysis shows that this hardly corresponds to reality: Why should th? Communists want to disrupt elections in which everyone is predicting their victory? But if Yeltsin is provoked into sharp and scandalous statements and moves, this would be very useful for them. This has partially come off: Yeltsin let slip words "about presidential measures."

It was a misguided observer who suggested that after Friday the Communists took a low profile and will now try to hush up the scandal. Far from it! CPRF leader Gennadiy Zyuganov has made a new sharp move in the election struggle, saying that, according to his sources, the presidential staff is working out plans for using force to impact on the situation that has developed since the Duma decree was adopted.

According to Zyuganov, the plans include a ban on the activity of the legally elected Duma and putting the army on combat alert, and, as a result, introducing a state of emergency.

Russia: Federation Council Seek Postponement of Elections

LD1903131096 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 19 Mar 96

[Report from the Federation Council session by unidentified correspondent; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] For over an hour deputies of the upper house of the Russian parliament discussed whether the request by the president to examine the situation in the country after the decision by the State Duma to annul the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements should be put on the agenda of its session. Several spoke in favor, several against. As a result of this discussion, it was also proposed that the issue of postponing the date of the presidential elections should be examined. This proposal was made by Anatoliy Tyazhlov, head of the Moscow district administration:

[Begin Tyazhlov recording] I propose that the issue of reviewing the date of the presidential elections should be made the third item on the agenda owing to the unconstitutional actions of the State Duma. [end recording]

He was supported by deputies Kovalev, Chub, and Sobchak. However the views of the senators were split. Many thought that the message by the president and the issue of postponing the presidential elections should not be examined since the decision of the State Duma on the annulment of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements has no juridical force and so the message by the president can be ignored by the Federation Council. Anatoliy Sobchak violently objected. In his view, to ignore the president's message would be a challenge to all the CIS states. Sobchak was supported by Galazov.

Attempting to calm down the senators, Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the upper chamber, said that he met with State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev both yesterday and today, before the session, and told him about the president's letter. After the report by their speaker, the senators decided to hear the chairmen of the three committees of the upper house who were instructed at meetings of their committees to analyze

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in detail the documents adopted by the State Duma and the president's message. First to speak to the deputies of the upper house was Vladimir Platonov:

[Begin Platonov recording] Assessing the activity of the lower house is a thankless task but I would like to touch on literally a few legal consequences and political consequences. First, the legal consequences: the adoption of the decision by the State Duma creates several legal problems. The decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR had the force of law. The decision of the State Duma does not have this force. The law adopted can only be annulled by another law. Thus, from the legal point of view, the decision adopted has no consequence. In other words, it does not abrogate the fact of the annulment of the treaties on the formation of the USSR.

As for the political consequences, briefly, I believe that this is an obstacle to the integration being carried out in the CIS, and which is being carried out not in words but in deeds. [end recording]

He was supported by Oleg Bogomolov who stated that the decision of the State Duma will produce a negative reaction in the CIS states and the world community. Then the floor was given to the president's representative at the Federation Council [not further identified]:

[Begin recording unidentified speaker] The decision of the State Duma essentially breaches the constitutional procedure for the adoption of laws in the Russian Federation and other important state decisions. The possible consequences of this are truly unforeseeable. Given this conflict, the search for a compromise — as follows from his message — is one of the first steps for the president, according to the constitution. And he has taken this step. [end recording] [video shows Federation Council in session, with various speakers]

Russia: Motion To Consider Duma Speaker Dismissal Rejected

LD2003112096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1041 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 20 (ITAR-TASS) — The State Duma has rejected a motion to put on agenda of its plenary session the question of the dismissal of Duma chairman Gennadiy Seleznev. A proposal to dismiss Seleznev was made by member of the "Yabloko" faction Yelena Mizulina.

She motivated the move, saying that the Duma speaker acctually contributed to the fact that after the Duma had adopted a notorious statement on Friday rendering invalid the resolution passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) on the denunciation of the treaty on the creation of the USSR, this document was amended.

Besides, Mizulina dislikes that her identification card of a Duma lawmaker signed by Seleznev bears an image of the building of the State Duma with a state emblem of the USSR on its facade instead of a state emblem of the Russian Federation. Mizulina also said that speaking on Russian television on Tuesday Seleznev, in her opinion, had publicly admitted that 250 Duma deputies had deliberately violated the Constitution of the Russian Federation when they adopted the notorious resolutions last Friday.

Mizilna's intiative to put the dimissal of Gennadiy Seleznev on the agenda of the Duma session was backed by 88 parliamentarians only, with 207 lawmakers voting against and four abstentions.

Russia: Duma's Zadornov Holds News Conference on 1996 Budget

MK1903140196 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Yelena Medvedeva: "The Good Thing About the Budget Is That It Has No Chechnya Expenditures"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The Federal Budget — Are Changes Possible?" was the theme of a press conference by Mikhail Zadornov, head of the Duma Budget Committee, held in the State Duma yesterday. Mikhail Zadornov described the implementation of the 1996 budget, dwelling on the situation with regard to wage arrears, and briefly spoke about a new draft law on amendments and riders to the budget.

Speaking about the implementation of the federal budget over first two months of 1996, Zadornov reiterated statements by the Finance Ministry to the effect that the budget is in a very sorry state. According to the Budget and Finance Committee, the budget was implemented in January through February by only 60 percent, tax revenues were 50 percent of those projected, privatization revenues were at 10 percent, and revenues coming in from the realization of securities were at 130 percent. Government investments and military-industrial complex revenues were as little as 30 percent of those planned. In addition, Zadornov pointed out that an unplanned 3 trillion rubles [R] from foreign economic activities came into federal coffers. Still, the budget did not receive R20 trillion in January and February, according to Zadornov.

Mikhail Zadornov cited the Finance Ministry's gloomy forecast that the budget will not receive between R85

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and R86 trillion rubles in the whole of 1996. But the current budget, in his view, also has good aspects to it — the Duma committee chairman described as a positive factor the circumstance that the government did not fund the rebuilding of the Chechen Republic during these two months.

Incidentally, the Budget and Finance Committee will not agree to any expenditures whatsoever connected with funding Chechnya. Turning to the draft law "On the Introduction of Amendments to the Law 'On the 1996 Federal Budget,'" Mikhail Zadornov stated that owing to this, the committee does not support one of the articles in this draft law. Under this new article, the government is free to sequester appropriations toward funding state investments of ministries, departments, and Russian Federation components in equal shares to carry through projects related to the rebuilding of the economy and social sphere of the Chechen Republic, to the amount of R3.7 trillion.

It should be noted that, judging by what Zadornov said, in other respects the Budget and Finance Committee does not object to the government's variant of this draft law. The lawmakers are most satisfied with the fact that the government proposes to include in the draft law on amendments to the 1996 budget the distribution of revenues, expenditures, deficits, and budget financing sources among the ministries on a quarterly basis, as well as a list of special-purpose programs. The committee is also in favor of paying off the 1995 debt of R3 trillion to the Pension Fund and taking some of the "rich" regions' budget funds to pay the "poor" regions.

Mikhail Zadornov's forecast of what the budget might receive from privatization was of great interest to those gathered. He thinks that should Goskomimushchestvo [State Committee for the Administration of State Property, GKI] "keep up the same methods of revenue collection as last year," it will surely fail to collect the R13 trillion owed to the budget. In Zadornov's opinion, the government can very well collect this sum if it is going to collect dividends from state-owned securities, including shares of RAO [Russian Joint-Stock Company] Gazprom and "EES [Single Power System of] Russia." The collection of privatization revenues, in Zadornov's words, is greatly impeded by the fact that the GKI still has no register of immovable property, as a result of which revenue from this property ends up in the hands of those who rent it.

Mikhail Zadornov stated in conclusion that the draft law "On the Introduction of Amendments to the Law 'On the 1996 Federal Budget'" will be put before the State Duma in the very near future.

Russia: Legislative, Regulatory Documents, 10-16 Mar

96P50062A

[FBIS Report] The following is a listing of Russian legislation recently published in the press of the Russian Federation compiled by FBIS. Numbers within parens indicate approximate wordage. Entries followed by the notation "Text" have been translated into English and are available in FBIS publications.

SECTION I: ECONOMIC LEGISLATION (EXPORT-IMPORT, BANKING, PRIVATIZATION, AUCTIONS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

Government 2 February Decree No. 96 On Use Of Territories' Strategic Planning Method When Resolving Questions Of Ryazan's Socioeconomic Development. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 5) (700)

Government 2 February Decree No. 97 Approving Appended (But Not Published) Composition And Statute Of Interdepartmental Council For State Financial Control And For Ensuring Prompt And Complete Collection Of Taxes And Other Federal Revenues, Plus Linkov Commentary. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (300/400)

Government 2 February Directive No. 126 Adopting Proposal From Agriculture Ministry On Allocation Of Grain To Components Of Federation From Federal Grain Stocks. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (150) (Text)

Government 19 February Decree No. 150 On Questions Concerning State Committee For Support And Development Of Small Business. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 5) (300)

Government 28 February Decree No. 191 On Authorized Federal State Body For State Regulation Of Establishment, Activity And Liquidation Of Financial And Industrial Groups. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 3) (230)

Government 28 February Decree No. 194 Accepting Construction Ministry Proposal That Article 4.4 Of Government's Comprehensive Action Plan For Implementation Of Yeltsin's 1995 Message To Parliament Be Deleted. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (150)

Government 28 February Decree No. 196 On Urgent Measures For Socioeconomic Development Of Karachayevo-Cherkess Republic In 1996-1998.

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(Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (1500)

Government 28 February Decree No. 206 On Measures To Step Up And Develop Foreign Currency Controls In the Russian Federation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 5) (700) (Text)

Government 28 February Decree No. 210 On Organs Performing Appraisals Of Mineral Deposits. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (400)

Government 28 February Decree No. 211 On Further Improvement Of Structure Of Vostochnaya Nef tyanaya Kompaniya (Eastern Oil Company) Joint-Stock Company. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 5) (500)

Government 28 February Decree No. 212 On Partial Alteration Of Customs Duty Rates (Relating To Machinery For Making Sand And Cement Structural Components). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (200)

Government 28 February Decree No. 222 Extending Duration Of State Holding Of Shares In Air Transport Joint-Stock Companies (List Of Companies To Be Published In 'Business In Russia' Section). (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 5) (250)

Government 28 February Directive No. 273 Approving Allocation Of Feed Concentrates To Various Ministries And Departments. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (150)

Government 28 February Directive No. 278 On Submission Of Draft Federal Law On Convertible And Ordinary Bills Of Exchange For Duma Ratification, Appointing Deputy Finance Minister Vyugin Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 5) (100)

Government 28 February Directive No. 297 Ordering That Russian Committee On Chemical And Petroleum Industry And State Committee For Administration Of State Property Vacate Certain Buildings. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (120)

Government 28 February Directive No. 299 Approving Proposed Privatization Of 'Amurgeo' Enterprise In City Of Svobodnyy, Amur Oblast. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (100)

Government 4 March Decree No. 229 On Issue Of Domestic State Foreign Currency Loan Bonds Plus Conditions Governing Said Issue. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 5) (1400/1500)

Government 6 March Decree No. 230 On Measures To Implement Presidential Edicts Aimed At Ensuring Prompt Payment Of Wage Arrears Owed To Budget-Funded Employees, Plus List Of Members Of Government Commission For Questions Of Wages In Budget-Funded Sphere. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (2000) (Text)

Government 6 March Decree No. 241 On Federal Targeted Program For Restoration Of Chechen Economy And Social Sphere In 1996. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 3) (250) (Text)

Government 6 March Directive No. 315 On Submission Of Draft Law Amending Law On Central Bank For Duma Ratification, Appointing Deputy Finance Minister Vyugin Government Spokesman. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 5) (150)

Government 6 March Decree No. 321 Instructing Ministries And Departments To Ensure Strict Linkage Of Their Budget Finances With Revenues Due To Federal Budget From Their Subordinate Enterprises And Organizations. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (800)

Federal Law No. 23 Of 7 March Amending Earlier Law On Excise Duties. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 4) (2500 Plus Two Tables)

Yeltsin 9 March Edict No. 345 On Measures To Stimulate Investment In 'Nakhodka' Free Economic Zone. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (600)

SECTION II: POLITICAL (INTERNATIONAL AND CIS AFFAIRS, ELECTIONS, CRIME, POLLUTION)

Government 12 October Decree No. 1019 On Submission For President's Consideration Of Proposals For Implementation Of Investment Agreement. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

Government 12 December Decree No. 1224 On Conclusion Of Agreement With Armenia To Combat Violations Of Tax Laws. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

Government 12 December Decree No. 1229 On Conclusion Of Agreement With Latvia On Cooperation In Border Matters. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

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Federation Council 22 February Decree No. 90 On Terminating Powers Of Federation Council Members P. Balakshin And Yu. Belikh Plus Comment By A. Kozyreva. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (300/1400) (Text)

Government 26 February Directive No. 237 On Transfer Of Various Clinics, Hospitals To Russian President's Administration Of Affairs. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (80)

Government 27 February Decree No. 184 On Signing Agreement Between Russia And Belarus On Settling Financial Claims. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (100) (Text)

Government 28 February Decree No. 193 Updating Earlier Government Decisions. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 6) (250)

Government 28 February Decree No. 199 On Changes To Russian Federation Government Decision Concerning Freedom Of Movement Of Citizens Arising From Adoption Of Law Of Russian Federation On Citizen's Rights To Freedom Of Movement, Choice Of Place Of Residence. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 6) (700)

Government 28 February Decree No. 203 On Composition Of Interdepartmental Commission On Protection Of State Secrets. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (250) (Text)

Government 28 February Decree No. 205 On Creation Of Institute For Enhancing Qualifications Of Prosecutor's Office Staffers. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 5) (300)

Government 28 February Decree No. 207 Setting Out Priorities For Payment Of Russia's Debts To International Organizations. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 6) (600 Plus Table) (Text)

Government 28 February Decree No. 218 On Conclusion Of Agreement With Azerbaijan On Cooperation In Transport And Subway Construction. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 28 February Decree No. 219 On Conclusion Of Agreement Between RF Government And Government Of Kazakhstan On Establishment Of Joint Enterprise To Manufacture Diesel Engines. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 14) (2500)

Government 28 February Decree No. 223 On Signing Of Agreement With Georgia On Commercial Shipping. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

Government 28 February Decree No. 228 On Approval And Submission For Ratification Of Agreement With Belarus On Mutual Convertibility Of The Two Countries Currencies. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (200)

Government 28 February Directive No. 286 Instructing Heads Of Various Departments To Draw Up Lists Of Information Subject To Being Classified. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (150) (Text)

Government 28 February Directive No. 290 On russian Delegation For Fisheries Talks With Japan. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 6) (150) (Text)

Government 28 February Directive No. 295 Extending Term Of 1991 RSFSR Council Of Ministers Decree On State Program For Development Of Northern Minority Peoples. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 96 p 6) (100)

Government 28 February Directive No. 298 Extending Area Covered By Maritime Kray Nature Reserve. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 6) (50)

Government 28 February Directive No. 301 Approving Initiative Of Moscow City Government, Itar-TASS, And Editorial Office Of Kultura To Establish Joint-Stock Company For Publication Of Kultura Newspaper. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (120)

Government 28 February Directive No. 307 On Approval For Proposal For Negotiations With Cuba On Agreement On Cooperation In Publishing And Distribution Of Printed Material. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 3) (50) (Text)

Chernomyrdin-Signed 28 February RF Government Directive No. 308 On Adoption Of Proposal By State Committee For VUZes On Holding Talks On Conclusion Of Agreement On Cooperation In Higher Education Matters With Republic Of Moldova. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 14) (100)

Government 6 March Decree No. 240 Changing Status Of Territorial Administration In Chechnya And Approving Appended Statute On Russian Government Mission There. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 6) (600/1000) (Text)

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Government 6 March Decree No. 242 On Annual Leave Entitlement Of Prosecutors And Associated Officials Working In Adverse Climatic Conditions. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 6) (200)

Government 6 March Decree No. 249 Introducing Additions To Decree No. 630 Of 27 June 1995 On Deferment Of Military Service. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 6) (200)

Government 6 March Decree No. 252 On Provision Of Backup For Activity Of Council Of Border Troops Commanders Coordination Service. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (600)

Government 6 March Decree No. 253 On Attracting FRG Credits For Support And Development Of Small Business In Russia. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (400)

Presidential 7 March Edict No. 337 On Implementation Of Citizen's Constitutional Rights To Land. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 5) (2000) (Text)

Presidential 7 March Edict No. 338 On Measures To Intensify Struggle Against Terrorism. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Mar 96 p 5) (1200) (Text)

Yeltsin 7 March Edict No. 340 Approving Appended Statute On Russian Federation President's Main Program And Analysis Administration. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 6) (50/2500) (Text)

Yeltsin 7 March Edict No. 341 On Ratification Of Statute On RF President's Main Administration For Questions Of State's Internal And Foreign Policy, Accompanied By Text Of Statute. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 5) (2850) (Text)

Yeltsin 9 March Edict No. 347 Appointing L.Yu. Rokatskiy, Dismissing A.I. Kazakov From President's Commission For Collaboration Between Federal And Local Organs Of Power In Implementing Constitutional And Legal Reform. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Yeltsin 9 March Edict No. 351 On Plenipotentiary Representatives Of RF President In Federal Assembly Chambers, Accompanied By Text Of Statute Thereon. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 5) (200/1400) (Text)

Yeltsin 9 March Edict No. 352 On Downsizing Of Federal Organs Of Executive Power And State Organs Under RF President, Accompanied By Tabulation Indicating TO For Said Organs. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 5) (250/150) (Text)

Yeltsin 9 March Edict No. 353 Approving Appended (But Not Published) Regulations For Certification Of Federal State Employees. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (300)

Federal Law No. 24 Signed By Yeltsin 12 March Amending Law On Duma, Federation Council Deputies' Status. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Mar 96 p 3) (200) (Text)

Yeltsin 12 March Directive No. 122 Amending Membership Of His Cadre Policy Council. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Mar 96 p 3) (200) (Text)

Presidential 12 March Edict No. 370 Approving Statute On Procedure For Work On Delimitation Of Powers Between Federal Organs Of State Power And Analgous Bodies In Components Of Federation, With Appended Statute. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 3) (2400)

Yeltsin 12 March Edict No. 374 Authorizing Petersburg Mayoral Election. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Mar 96 p 3) (200)

Yeltsin 12 March Edict No. 375 On Foreign Ministry's Coordinating Role In Pursuit Of Russia's Foreign Policy. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4) (1800) (Text)

Yeltsin 14 March Edict No. 378 On Measures To Rehabilitate Religious Believers Persecuted And Repressed By 'Bolshevik Party-Soviet Regime.' (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 5) (250) (Text)

Russian-Belarusian Agreement On Avenues For Trade And Economic Cooperation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (2000)

Russian-Belarusian Agreement On Price Policy. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 11) (800)

CIS Heads Of State Council Decision To Hold 1st Congress Of CIS Cultural Workers And On Other Questions Of Interstate Cultural Cooperation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 12) (1000)

Text Of Convention On Simplified Procedure For Obtaining Citizenship By Citizens Of CIS States. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 13) (1850)

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Text Of Agreement Between RF Government And CIS's Interstate Statistical Committee Governing Conditions Of Its Presence On RF Territory. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 13) (2000)

Text Of Agreement Between RF Government And Armenian Government On Cooperation And Exchange Of Information In Combating Breaches Of Taxation Legislation. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 13) (2550)

Text Of Agreement Between RF Government And Mongolian Government On International Motor Vehicle Links, Accompanied By Protocol Thereto. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 14) (2800/450)

Text Of Agreement Between RF Government And Government Of Pakistan On Cooperation In Fight Against Illegal Trade In And Abuse Of Narcotics And Psychotronic Substances. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 14) (1150)

SECTION III: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Government 28 February Decree No. 195 Approving Statute On All-Russia Disaster Medical Service, With Appended Statute. (Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Mar 96 p 4) (300/2000)

Regional Affairs

Russia: Republic Presidents Oppose Russian Duma Resolution

LD1903183796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (INTERFAX) — Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaymiyev views the resolution on effective denunciation of the Belovezh Accords adopted last week as "unserious" and is convinced that "it pursues exclusively political goals" on the eve of the presidential elections.

However, initiators of this resolution have miscalculated and will lose votes as a result of this, he said addressing the Tuesday session of the Federation Council, of which body he is a member.

According to Shaymiyev, the lower chamber has taken on a phantom both because "the same people who contributed to the collapse of the USSR are now furthering its restoration," and because it is "an unreal task" to restore the Soviet Union in its former form.

Undoubtedly, the Commonwealth of Independent States will be transformed in a principally new community similar to the European one, Shaymiyev believes. A referendum will be probably held in CIS countries for this purpose.

He does not share the opinion that the Federation Council should adopt a resolution on this issue. The chamber may pass only a political statement, Shaymiyev said.

For his part, having underlined that he is sharply critical of the State Duma resolution, North Ossetia's President Akhsarbek Galazov proposed that the Federation Council address the lower chamber with a statement and send a request to the Constitutional Court which "must announce its final verdict on lawfulness of the decision adopted by the State Duma."

"Nobody is allowed to use Russia's interests in ambiguous political games." Galazov said.

Russia: Leningrad Base Hosts Roundtable on Navy Situation, Problems

MM2003122896 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Oleg Pochinyuk: "Navy's Problems Discussed at 'Roundtable'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A "roundtable" on the subject of "The Present State of and Problems Facing the Russian Navy" has been held at Leningrad Naval Base headquarters as part of the program to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Russian Navy.

Participants in the "roundtable" — and they included recent fleet commanders — voiced their views of Armed Forces reform, the Navy's role in the country's military policy, and the ways of extricating it from its current difficult position. St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak took part in the discussion.

Aboard the cruiser Avrora the admirals met with representatives of three generations of naval seamen: war veterans, Leningrad Naval Base personnel, Nakhimov Naval School students, and cadets. A discussion took place in the renowned ship's wardroom regarding the continuity of the national navy's traditions and young people's heroic-patriotic education.

Russia: Illegal Radioactive Waste Dumps Found in Moscow Oblast

MM1903165096 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Kochubey: "Radioactive Waste Putting Forth Spring Shoots"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An illegal radioactive waste burial site was discovered in the city of Khimki in

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Moscow Oblast. The owner of the lethal load, weighing around 24 tonnes, turned out to be the "NTTs Nuklon" limited partnership. It was directed to bury the radioactive containers on the territory of the "Mayak" production association, in Chelyabinsk Oblast, before 1 May this year.

The radioactive waste was removed from Khimki. But investigators have now discovered some dangerous containers in the city of Lytkarino, in Moscow Oblast. There were more than 20 new containers alongside. The total find was 28 containers weighing around 40 tonnes, worth a total of 1,708,000,000 rubles.

Economic Issues

Russia: U.S. Grain Shortages To Affect Next Russian President

MK1903140296 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Tatyana Koshkareva: "Panic on the Grain Market. Shortage of U.S. Wheat Will Affect Future President"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The report that U.S. grain crops are affected by wet rot [Karnal bunt] fungus makes the Russian grain supply situation catastrophic. America remains the main supplier of this commodity on the world market, where Russia continues to make procurements for its own needs. It will be recalled that in mid-1995 experts at the All-Russia Agriculture Institute predicted that in 1996 Russia would need to import 10 million tonnes of grain. During this period the gross grain harvest was estimated at 70 million tonnes.

The estimates by institute experts, however, proved exaggerated. In 1995 the lowest grain crop in the last 32 years was raised in the Russian Federation — 63.5 million tonnes, 22 percent less than in 1994. The actual volumes of centralized carry-over grain stocks (i.e. state reserves) are still not being publicly disclosed. Even so, many serious experts tend to believe that in early 1996 state reserves have already been effectively exhausted.

The aforementioned is confirmed by Economy Ministry forecasts whereby toward July 1996 an emergency situation could evolve in the country because food resources will be effectively exhausted, while the newly harvested grain cannot be used before August 1996. Economy Ministry experts note that 5-6 million tonnes of food grain will need to be procured outside Russia. For their part, specialists at the SovEkon center predict a shortage of 7-8 million tonnes in 1996, 4-5 million tonnes of which will be food wheat, including flour.

These forecasts, however, may have to be upwardly adjusted. Last year's drought affected not only the volume of grain production, but also grain quality. Thus, the wheat which remained on Rostov and Stavropol farms is affected by the "shield bug" [klop-cherepashka] and is unfit for making bread. If these gloomy forecasts are fulfilled, Russia will have to spend approximately 20 percent of its IMF credit for 5-6 million tonnes of grain; that is to say, $1.2-1.4 billion.

Even so, these estimates were based on early February prices, when a tonne of wheat on the world market was $216-250. The present critical situation with winter wheat in the United States could bring about a jump in prices. Bill de Maria, an expert at the International Grain Council, says that the next four to five weeks will be crucial for the U.S. harvest.

Meanwhile pending grain expenditures do not at all worry state officials. They are sure that this year there will be no centralized grain imports to Russia. At any rate, Aleksandr Kalinin, chief of the Russian Federation Government's Agroindustrial Complex Department, announced at the time that "contrary to reports in the Western media, [he] is not considering the question of holding a tender for the purchase of grain abroad for federal needs, because there are no funds for centralized grain imports envisioned in the federal budget."

The most interesting part, however, is that in spite of the expected grain shortage, in the second half of last year the volume of grain exports from Russia increased sharply. In the [first] nine months of last year 475,000 tonnes of grain were exported from the Russian Federation. Russian grain was exported predominantly to Ukraine, Belarus, and Azerbaijan. Moreover, export operations were handled for the most part not by commercial structures but by regional authorities. Fearing that the regions will take the whole harvest out of the country, in September 1995 the state slapped on grain export duties. These measures, however, did not work: Grain began to be exported via Belarus.

The grain shortage will apparently be the first serious economic problem which will confront the future Russian president. He will have to raise at least $1 billion for additional grain imports. There is no money within the country. It is clear that not even a cent will be provided by the West, which has already spent considerable sums on the Russian elections. The president therefore could fall under the onslaught of wet rot and the "shield bug," not at all inflation or the budget deficit.

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Russia: Federation Council Committee Head Views Food Imports

LD1903210796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1959 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, March 19 (INTERFAX) — Russia "has lost food independence and become strategically dependent on food imports," Yevgeniy Savchenko, head of the Federation Council Agrarian Policy Committee, told a session of the upper house Tuesday [19 March] as the council discussed urgent measures to ensure Russia's food security.

Savchenko believes that the last month's "poultry war" between the United States and Russia is an omen of the approaching food dependence of the latter. He recalled that Russia's gross agricultural production fell 33 percent over the past five years, in particular grain production fell 46 percent, sugar - 41 percent and dairy products - 29 percent. Imported food currently accounts for about 40 percent of food consumed by Russia's population, while in Moscow the figure is 70 percent, he said.

The committee has put forth a package of proposals, including "to return the internal food market overtaken by importers, to Russian peasants." Otherwise, the country's agricultural production will fall so low that only some regions will be able to provide themselves with food, the committee said.

The committee also proposes to impose quotas on the import of basic foods, instead of "fighting food intervention with customs duties, as it is done now." Agrarians believe that, among other measures, it is necessary to establish state monopoly on major food groups.

Russia: Central Bank Seeks To Justify Growth in Money Supply

MK1903150496 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Viktor Ivanov: "The Central Bank Will Increase Russia's Money Supply"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Perhaps the most important economic document in Russia — "The Main Guidelines of the Central Bank's Monetary and Credit Policy for 1996" — has been almost finalized. True, the Duma Budget and Finance Committee decided that it needs to be reworked, but this will not affect its essence. It follows from the document that the Central Bank reserves the right to pursue a policy flexible to the degree possible; put simply, the right to freely increase the money supply.

Can any conclusions about the Central Bank's actual monetary and credit policy in 1996 be drawn from the text of the "Guidelines"? Definitely. And here is why. Back in November of last year a draft of this document was submitted to Boris Yeltsin and considered at a government session. It transpired immediately that the document did not contain any specific figures showing changes in Central Bank assets — what is usually called a monetary program; in other words, the document said basically nothing about what the Central Bank was planning to do with money in 1996. The program was finalized but the new text presented to the State Duma still lacks concrete figures. It has thus become finally clear that the Central Bank does not want to limit its freedom to maneuver.

Central Bank chief Sergey Dubinin in effect admits this, stressing in a letter to [Duma] deputies that "the achievement of the ultimate goals (stability of the national currency) calls for a flexible approach to using monetary and credit policy instruments." Dubinin also cites the fact that no monetary policy may in principle be submitted to the government or parliament until it has been coordinated with the IMF. The implication of this is that after a joint statement by the government and the Central Bank about monetary policy in 1996 and the IMF's final decision to extend a $10.2 billion loan, a monetary program may still appear. Yet it can be predicted with confidence that the Central Bank will seek to get the IMF to agree to a program that is as flexible and vague as possible, citing primarily the fact that with unduly tough monetary guidelines, it will be impossible to cope with the difficult task of noninflationary coverage of the budget deficit.

All this only shows that the Central Bank is preparing the ground for expanding the money supply, i.e., emissions. The approximate scale of these emissions is already clear, because some aggregate indicators of the proposed money supply growth are shown in the "Guidelines." For instance, whereas at the close of 1995 the money supply, according to Central Bank estimates, was approximately 200 trillion rubles, by the close of 1996 it should increase to 283-295 trillion, i.e., by 42-48 percent. The document contains a fine-looking substantiation for the emissions need, which adds up to an increase in the demand for money. According to the Central Bank, in 1996 this demand will grow primarily owing to "a slowing down of production decline rates." Moreover, the velocity of money circulation will fall as a result of money supply restructuring wherein the share of highly liquid assets will contract while the share of fixed-term bank deposits will expand (here, the document stresses, a certain role will be played by a fall in inflation, the maintenance of positive interest rates on

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ruble deposits, the introduction of mandatory bank deposit insurance, and the general "consolidation of the credibility of the banking system") — and this slowing in the velocity of money circulation will also result in an increased demand for it. Finally, in the context of low inflation, investments will grow, which will in turn call for in increase in money supply.

In fact, however, all of these money demand factors may not materialize [at once]: For instance, the credibility of the banking system will not grow or investments will not increase. Yet a justification for emissions has already been found, and this is very important. In the run-up to the elections, in the absence of budgetary funds, all hopes can only be pinned on Central Bank emissions. The fact that the budget deficit cannot be dealt with through direct loans does not change anything here: There are different ways money can be pumped into the economy. And this year the Central Bank intends to use all of these methods: For instance, by intensifying operations with state securities or providing special loans to commercial banks in temporary financial difficulties.

Especially noteworthy is the great attention the "Guidelines" give to the need for increasing the ruble supply in the context of the de-dollarization of the economy. Whereas last year the Central Bank began to somewhat doubt the noninflationary character of its acquiring dollars with emission rubles, those wishing to get rid of their dollars should definitely be assisted, especially given that the building up of hard currency reserves has been proclaimed as almost the top priority in Central Bank activity. Here it should be recalled that this year the first tranche of the aforementioned unprecedented IMF credit will hit the Russian hard currency market. And the Central Bank may say that it simply has to resort to emissions with the aim of buying up these dollars — if only in order to prevent unpredictable fluctuations in the [exchange] rate.

Russia: Official, Workers Cited on Inflation Rate Drop

MM2003101896 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Dmitriy Dokuchayev: "Record Low Inflation Recorded in Russia; Fortuitous or Natural?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The lowest rise in consumer prices for a week since the start of their liberalization (0.4 percent) was recorded in the period 5 through 11 March. Here prices for food rose by 0.4 percent and for nonfood goods by 0.3 percent while paid services increased 0.6 percent in price. If the present rates continue then the monthly inflation increase for March will not exceed 2.2-2.6 percent. That is it will be even lower than in February, so far the most successful month, when the increase was 2.8 percent. It is curious that such low inflation rates have been a surprise even to specialists of the Goskomstat [State Committee for Statistics] and the Ministry of the Economy with whom I discussed the problem.

Specialist's Commentary

Irina Goryacheva, chief of the Russian Federation Goskomstat prices statistics administration:

"The low inflation rates attest in our view to two things. First, the government is fulfilling its promise not to stuff the economy with empty money. Second, the slowing down of the rates of decline in the ruble exchange rate against the dollar is having an effect. The point is that imported goods, prices for which are showing almost no increase, make up 40 percent of our consumer market. And Russian producers and traders are obliged willy-nilly to orient themselves toward them.

"And today there are no grounds for supposing that something could wreck this dynamic of the reduction in inflation rates so promising for the country."

Will the slowing down of the increase in prices affect people's lives? We put this question to several passers-by on Moscow's streets.

Opinion of Woman Living on Her Wage

Natalya Rogatko, chief engineer at a scientific research institute:

"Perhaps prices have not been growing that much recently. But where can they grow to: They are already at a fantastically high level. My wage, if we are to believe the statistics, is an average one by Moscow standards. But when I make any decisions to spend money, be it the purchase of a monthly season ticket for transport or a trip to the cinema with my son, I carefully weigh up all the pros and cons. So even a small increase in prices is painful enough for me."

Bank Employee's View of the Problem

Irina Kolosova, commercial bank manager:

"As a bank employee I know very well that inflation is falling. In our business there is a natural law whereby the lower inflation then the harder it is to earn money. Yet at the domestic level this is sensed almost not at all. Sometimes we encounter a quite marked increase in prices, as was the case recently for rail tickets. Moreover, in various parts of Moscow the same goods cost different amounts and it is hard to understand

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whether that is the consequence of inflation or whether you have simply entered a more expensive store.

"The drastic slowing down of inflation rates can of course be credited to the government. It would be no bad thing if this trend were not to be shaken by election battles, traditionally accompanied by populist decisions and broad gestures on the part of the authorities. And it would be really wonderful if every Russian were to feel for himself the reduction in inflation rates as genuinely as he felt their recent unrestrained growth."

Russia: More Regions Receive Wage Arrears Payments

MM2003103696 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 20 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Enough Money for Wages"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to information for 19 March, a further seven regions of Russia in addition to the previously announced 15 regions have received 100 percent of the sums earmarked to pay off budget wage arrears.

According to an announcement by Aleksandr Livshits, the head of state's aide, 100 percent financial support has been received by the following: Novgorod Oblast (33,1 billion rubles [R]); Pskov Oblast (R64.5 billion); Republic of Khakasiya (R46.7 billion); Bryansk Oblast (R63.5 billion), Ivanovo Oblast (R48.0 billion); Kaluga Oblast (R47.6 billion); and the Altay Republic (R54.4 billion). In addition substantial finances are simultaneously continuing to reach other regions, the Russian president's press service reports.

Russia: Rescue Operation Planned for Indebted Oil Enterprise

MM1903201996 Moscow TRUD in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "There Will Be Fewer Debtors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Even enterprises in the oil extracting sector — the main export sector of the Russian economy — have not been able to avoid debts to the state budget and wage debts to their workers, ITAR-TASS reports. In order to resolve this problem, certain major associations intend to mount a rescue operation [sanatsiya] for debtor enterprises.

"Menatep," one of the biggest Russian banks, and the "Yukos" oil company have begun jointly implementing a program for the financial recovery of a subsidiary enterprise — the "Yuganskneftegaz" oil extracting joint-stock company. This program is needed, Bank Vice President Aleksandr Samusev reported, because the enterprise's wage debt had reached 500 billion rubles [R] by the end of last year, while debts to the federal budget had reached R1.2 trillion.

The program includes a number of measures aimed at enhancing the level of efficiency by reducing unproductive expenditure and making maximum use of existing capacities. Volumes of drilling will be reduced by 30-40 percent in 1996, and at the same time the number of currently inactive wells brought into operation has been increased.

Measures are planned to stabilize the social situation in Nefteyugansk, in particular, elimination of wage arrears. Wages unpaid last year will be converted into financial debt securities. These will accrue interest comparable with the level of inflation. Every worker at the enterprise will be able to obtain money on the basis of the securities before going on leave.

According to specialists' calculations, in order to achieve these objectives it is necessary to cut around 10,000 workers (the "Yuganskneftegaz" joint-stock company currently employs around 52,000 people). People who do not live actually in Nefteyugansk will lose their jobs. These are duty-tour groups of oilmen who fly in from afar, some of them from the "near abroad" — there are 8,000 of them.

According to "Yukos" Company President Sergey Muravlenko, at the same time financial recovery work is being carried out with the Russian State Tax Service and the tax police department.

The rescue operation at the major enterprise is expected to yield tangible results as early as this year.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Notes Stance on NATO Before Meeting Christopher

LD1903125396 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1200 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — "Events are occurring in Ukraine that affect and will affect the future, and not only the future of Ukraine — in particular, the adoption of a new constitution," Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma stressed in a statement for the press prior to a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

According to the Ukrainian head of state, a set of economic issues are to be be discussed during the dialogue with the U.S. secretary of state. "The Ukrainian economy now needs assistance, but it is not standing with hands outstretched; it needs cooperation on a mutually advantageous basis," Leonid Kuchma noted.

Replying to a question on discussion of the issue of closer integration with NATO, Leonid Kuchma noted that Kiev is interested in cooperation with the North Atlantic alliance. According to him, notwithstanding the decision by the Russian State Duma, Ukraine's stance regarding NATO has been decided and it abides by this stance, while in future "life will show us what decision we should make with regard to NATO."

For his part, Warren Christopher stressed that he is meeting the Ukrainian president for the third time, which demonstrates the importance of mutual relations between the two states. He noted that contacts with Ukraine on security issues are increasing, which is important for all world countries. "In accordance with the trilateral statement by the Ukrainian, Russian, and U.S. presidents on the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Ukrainian territory, adopted in January 1994, Ukraine should become nuclear-free by this year," the U.S. secretary of state said. According to him, all the sides that signed the document should fulfill their obligations, in particular, in accordance with the statement, Russia should compensate for the value of the tactical nuclear weapons withdrawn from Ukraine.

Warren Christopher called the Russian State Duma's decision to revoke the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements an irresponsible step. He stressed that history could not be reversed. "Ukraine is a sovereign, independent state, and the international community should reject such endeavors to alter its status," the U.S. secretary of state noted.

Ukraine: Udovenko Meets With Warren Christopher

LD1903182196 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Bilateral relations between Ukraine and the United States as well as the situation in Europe were discussed at a meeting between U.S. State Secretary Warren Christopher and Ukraine's Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko. According to the latter, it is possible to state that the level of current relations in the political, trade, economic and other spheres are high.

Warren Christopher confirmed that the United States will support Ukraine's inviolability and territorial integrity. The U.S. Secretary of State also said that U.S. President Bill Clinton would take part in the Moscow summit in April.

According to UNIAN, Warren Christopher was given a letter inviting U.S. Vice-President Al Gore to take part in the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster.

Hennadiy Udovenko noted that Ukraine supported active cooperation with NATO, particularly, as part of the Partnership for Peace program.

With regard to the initiative by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze to hold a CIS summit to discuss the problems connected with the decision of the Russian Federation State Duma to revoke the Belovezh Pushcha agreements, Hennadiy Udovenko said that Ukraine was not against participating in it, however, "the proposal had to be studied."

The Ukrainian foreign minister also noted that Ukraine supported the idea of a single European security system with which it had to enter the next millennium.

Ukraine: Moroz Comments on Meeting With Christopher

LD1903192596 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — At a meeting with Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz on 19 March, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced that his country "had and would continue to help Ukraine implement its economic reforms". He said that one of the conditions for helping Ukraine would be to attract private U.S. capital which required privatization to be speeded up in Ukraine.

The U.S. secretary of state stressed that the United States "understood very well the role of the Ukrainian parliament in implementing economic reforms."

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Moroz noted that "Ukraine's role as a factor of stability in Europe had not been considered for a long time by the United, however, due to the joint efforts of both countries this attitude had now been overcome". He also stressed that Ukraine was more in need of "mutually advantageous cooperation without preconditions attached" than aid. "It is a mistaken policy to put forward demands," Moroz said.

Moroz stressed that a necessary precondition of safeguarding stability in Europe was internal stability in the state which could be guaranteed by a democratic constitution. He said that the draft constitution, proposed by the constitutional commission and submitted for parliamentary approval, did not conform to this criterion because the voters would be deprived of the right to choose the power and change it if required.

At the meeting Moroz also raised the issue of NATO's expansion eastwards and the idea of holding in Ukraine an international conference on security and cooperation in Europe.

Ukraine: Christopher Says U.S. To Assist With Reforms

LD1903195296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1912 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 19 (Itar-Tass) - U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said, concluding his one-day visit to Ukraine on Tuesday, that the U.S. is watching with satisfaction Ukraine's new steps towards economic reforms and to its new constitution.

Christopher has held talks with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and other statesmen.

The two sides discussed bilateral issues and international cooperation between the Ukraine and the U.S.

Ukraine declared its wish to broaden its cooperation with NATO and endorsed NATO's part in the setting up of an integral European security system.

Christopher and Ukrainian leaders have also discussed the recent bid by the Russian State Duma to scrap the CIS-founding agreement.

Christopher described the move as a scare, saying that any unilateral move to alter the status of the CIS members should be immediately thrust back. He added that this issue should be raised at an international level.

Christopher travelled on to Prague to attend a meeting of Central and East European foreign ministers, due on March 20, which will discuss NATO's expansion plan.

Ukraine: Christopher, Kuchma Criticize Duma Vote on USSR

WS2003081996 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0131 GMT 20 Mar 96

[By Ed Zwirn, INTELNEWS Staff Writer]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, March 19 — United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher came out strongly against last week's Russian Duma vote to reconstitute the Soviet Union.

Speaking at a meeting with President Leonid Kuchma in Maryinskiy Palace, Christopher called the vote "highly irresponsible," and said that "any attempt to change (the) status of (Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union) should be rejected by the international community."

"President Kuchma was certainly correct when he said the tide of history cannot be turned back," he said.

Kuchma, for his part, called for stability in Ukraine in the face of both the vote and the upcoming June Russian presidential elections.

"Ukraine needs political stability more than ever," he said, after stressing the importance of the draft constitution due to be considered as a replacement for the one the country inherited from the Soviet era.

"Though the Russian Duma decision is irrelevant to us both legally and juridicially, we cannot ignore its social and political importance."

The Ukrainian President also discussed the foreign policy implications of the Duma vote, saying it acted as a "pretext for the Eastern European nations that have just declared their desire to seek membership in NATO to pursue this goal more actively."

He said that while Ukraine is "interested in cooperating with NATO more closely," this position was unaffected by the Duma vote and no indicator of whether or not the country will seek eventual NATO membership, abandoning its official non-aligned status.

"Despite any decision of the State Duma or anyone else's, Ukraine has identified its position as regards NATO as is solemnly abiding by it," he said. "I think time works for Ukraine — not against her."

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Ukraine: Kuchma: Duma Resolution May Push Eastern Europe Into NATO

LD1903164396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1546 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian parliament's denunciation of the break-up of the Soviet Union might excite Eastern European countries' desire to enter NATO, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said on Tuesday before he entered talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"Ukraine needs political stability," Kuchma said. Although the resolution has no legal consequences for Ukraine, it may adversely affect its relations with Russia, he said at the outset of talks with Christopher who arrived in Kiev for one-day visit.

Such actions by Russian lawmakers may pressurise Eastern European states into entering NATO, he said. Ukraine had determined its attitude towards NATO long before. Ukraine is interested in expanding relations with the Alliance, he said.

Ukraine has announced that it will be staying outside NATO. At the same time, it will be actively participating in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme.

It is "the best position from the standpoints of both West and East," he said.

Kuchma said he would discuss a package of economic issues during his talks with Christopher. Ukraine is in a very difficult situation and needs help, he said.

The U.S. will continue cooperation with Ukraine which Christopher called an important partner. He highly assessed bilateral cooperation to achieve security in Europe. Ukraine will get rid of its nuclear stockpiles, he said.

In this connection, all signatories to the trilateral Agreement should comply with their obligations. Ukraine should receive compensation for the dismantled warheads, he said

Christopher also said he intended to discuss the shutdown of the Chernobyl nuclear power station by the year 2000.

Ukraine and the U.S. intend to hold joint war exercises in the west of Ukraine this autumn, he said. Speaking about Ukrainian-Russian relations, he greeted Ukraine's intention to make them pragmatic.

In another development, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko told reporters he did not oppose the idea of Ukraine participating in a CIS summit to discuss the State Duma's resolution denouncing the break-up of the Soviet Union.

The initiative was launched by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze.

"First, we should study the initiative thoroughly," Udovenko said.

Ukraine: Foreign Ministry Statement Condemns Duma Decision on CIS

AU2003121896 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 19 Mar 96 p 3

["Statement by Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Concerning the Adoption by the State Duma of the Russian Federation of the Decision 'On Deepening Integration Among the Peoples That United To Form the USSR and On Revoking the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Decree of 12 December 1991'" issued in Kiev on 15 March 96]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 15 March 1996, the State Duma of the Russian Federation adopted the decision "On Deepening Integration Among the Peoples That United To Form the USSR and On Revoking the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Decree of 12 December 1991." The said decree adopted by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet on 12 December 1991 denounced the treaty on the creation of the USSR.

In this connection, Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been authorized to state the following.

The adoption by the State Duma of the Russian Federation of the aforementioned decision is viewed in Ukraine as an attempt by certain political forces in Russia to revive the former USSR. The hopes of reviving the former single union state have no legal basis, including the provisions of international law, and do not conform to the realities of the political situation that has currently taken shape both in the development of the independent countries that emerged on the territory of the former USSR and in the development of the CIS as a whole. Ukraine condemns such actions as constituting a threat to peace and stability not only in the CIS states, but also in the entire world community.

For more than four years Ukraine has been implementing its right to self-determination in accordance with the generally recognized principles and norms of international law as laid down in the UN Charter and in the Helsinki Final Act. The Ukrainian people's will to create an independent Ukrainian state received the highest form of legitimacy through the results of the nationwide referendum that was held on 1 December 1991. Almost 92 percent of the population voted for Ukrainian independence.

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Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been authorized to state that the aforementioned decision adopted by the Russian Federation State Duma does not generate any legal consequences for Ukraine, because it is an internal act of the Russian Federation and cannot have any extraterritorial jurisdiction. Apart from this, implementation of such a decision will, in fact, mean the withdrawal of Russia from the Commonwealth of Independent States with all the unpredictable consequences that that entails.

From the very start of the existence of the CIS, Ukraine, as a founder state of the CIS, has been pursuing a course toward intensification and expansion of equal and mutually advantageous cooperation within the framework of the Commonwealth and proceeding from the understanding that the forms of its participation in the CIS and its status there are determined by the legislative acts adopted by Ukraine's Supreme Council during the ratification of the treaty on the creation of the CIS, with relevant reservations. Ukraine will continue to proceed from the understanding that the creation of the CIS made it possible to preserve, in the new historical conditions, those close and multilateral ties that existed between the republics of the former Soviet Union and to prevent the development of dangerous trends that could lead to general instability and serious conflicts on the territory of the former USSR.

Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is compelled to state that, against the background of the ongoing processes of strengthening and intensifying both bilateral and multilateral ties within the framework of the CIS, certain political forces in individual member states of the Commonwealth are resorting to steps that may considerably complicate the situation in the CIS. It is precisely in this way that the aforementioned decision by the Russian Federation State Duma may be qualified.

Kiev, 15 March 1996.

Ukraine: Officers: Duma Decision Attempt To Spark Ukraine Civil War

LD1903231596 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — Various civic organizations and political parties are continuing to express their attitudes to the decision by the Russian State Duma of 15 March to revoke the Belovezh agreements. In particular, the executive committee of the Union of Officers of Ukraine has adopted a statement. The preamble states that left-wing forces both in Ukraine and in Russia have been preparing for this for some time. The process was completed by the arrival in Ukraine of the Russian State Duma delegation headed by Russian Communist Party leaders who in their public speeches pledged to support Ukrainian independence and respect its sovereignty. Ukrainian left-wing forces, who are blocking the adoption of the new Ukrainian constitution, worked and continue to work jointly on the annulment of the agreements signed by the Russian side and are helping to create in Ukraine a Union of Soviet Officers whose aim is the forceful destruction of our independence. The statement reads: "We assess Russia's actions and those of the left-wing forces as another attempt to incite civil war in Ukraine."

The Union of Officers of Ukraine proposes that the UN Security Council should immediately discuss the decision by the Russian State Duma and enter into interstate negotiations with Russia on the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Russian military formations from Ukrainian territory and its territorial waters since its presence on our territory destabilizes peace and security not only in the region but also throughout Ukraine.

The Union of Officers of Ukraine requests that the Ukrainian president and the Supreme Council should consider the state of Ukrainian-Russian relations at a Ukrainian Supreme Council session in accordance with the law on the declaration of state sovereignty of Ukraine and the referendum of 1 December 1991.

Ukraine: Editorial on Possible Effect of Duma Decision on USSR

WS2003104196 Kiev ZERKALO NEDELI in Russian No. 11 (76) 16-22 Mar 96 p 4

[Untitled editorial under the "Response" rubric]

[FBIS Translated Text] The only thing which is clear is that the Russian State Duma's decision [on annulling the agreement dissolving the USSR] will have legal consequences neither in the Russian Federation nor in Ukraine. The problem lies somewhere else. Similar decisions, along with the nostalgia among middle-aged and elderly people in CIS countries, and declining living standards, create a good environment for the forest of red banners to grow. Successes of like-minded people in Russia inspire their Ukrainian colleagues...

Many political experts believe that the debate on the new constitution will not only become a testing ground to clarify the relations between the executive and legislative branches and between the left and right-wingers, but will also be a matter of life or death for Ukrainian statehood. This can be confirmed by the signatures collected in support of holding a referendum including, among other things, a question about restoring the Soviet Union.

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"The people are not interested in politics. Everybody has become tired of rallies. Nobody will come to barricades under either red- and-blue [colors of Soviet Ukraine] or red-and-black [nationalists' colors] banners." One can quite often see similar opinions on the pages of newspapers, but at the same time many politicians forget that society's political activeness — which was observed in the early 1990's — can easily be transformed into growing disappointment with living standards. Unemployment, darkened cities, unpaid wages — all of this may lead people to the same barricades, the only difference being that they will not notice what kind of banners they will be handed, what slogans will be written on the placards, and whose goals they will be made to pursue....

To make anyone responsible for an "attempt to overthrow the constitutional system by force" in Ukraine, one must see a theoretical Symonenko [Ukrainian Communist Party leader] or Moroz [Supreme Council chairman and Socialist Party leader] brandishing machine guns and holding slogans with the clearly stated goal of their rally under the windows of the presidential palace. All other appeals, signature collections, or ceremonial rallies pass through large loopholes in Ukrainian legislation. The current Supreme Council will certainly not fill them with the appropriate contents. Evidently, the president, too, will be afraid of doing so by his edicts, first of all, because he has no right to do so even in connection with the constitutional agreement [between the president and the parliament], and second, because of his unwillingness to pour oil over the flames of debates with the parliament — which is already accusing Leonid Kuchma of excessive concentration of power, and not always unjustifiably. Additionally, excessive liberalism may result in a loss of statehood, and excessive bolt-tightening — in a dictatorship. It is necessary to find the golden mean while attempting to put a legislative fence in the way of the left march. Will the country's healthy forces be able to do this? At least, such an attempt should be made because the voice of the law is still better than a cannonade.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma, Parliament Disagree on Procedures for Constitution

LD1903212696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1610 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kyev, March 18 (Interfax - Ukraine) — The Ukrainian President and Verkhovna Rada disagree only about the procedure of the adoption of the new Constitution, Parliament Speaker Oleksandr Moroz said.

"As a matter of fact, we share the views on the Fundamental Law to be adopted in the near future", he pointed out speaking in interview with newsmen on Monday [18 March] evening. "There is no confrontation between me and the President", O. Moroz stressed.

He believes that the Constitution of Ukraine "should be adopted in keeping with the parliamentary rules". "This is the most acceptable and legal machinery for the endorsement of the country's Constitution", the Verkhovna Rada Chair noted.

Ukraine: OSCE Parley Discusses Constitution for Crimea

WS2003093196 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0131 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, March 19. All participants of a roundtable in Norrviken (the Netherlands), which began Sunday under the aegis of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, agree that the Crimean Constitution should be approved in the shortest possible time, Crimean Deputy Parliament Speaker Anushavan Danelian, who participated in work of the roundtable, said Monday.

On the other hand, Anton Buteyko, First Deputy Foreign Minister, who also participated in the roundtable, said Tuesday in Kiev that "not a single autonomous region of the world possesses a constitution."

"Such phenomenon as a Constitution of an autonomy appeared only in post-Soviet countries. For example, Bashkyrstan and Tatarstan, which are part of the Russian Federation, have constitutions of their own," Butkevych said at a briefing in the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

Butkevych stressed, all expenditures on settling down Crimea Tatars migrants are withdrawn from Ukrainian budget. "Not a single CIS country helps Ukraine, in spite of a convention signed between them on returning home deported peoples," Buteyko said.

Other roundtable participants include Deputy Prime Minister Vasyl Durdynets, Parliament Legal Committee Chairman Volodymyr Stretovych and Crimean Parliament Speaker Yevhen Supruniuk.

According to a source in the Crimean Parliament Presidium, the OSCE intends to close its mission in Ukraine. The Foreign Ministry refused to confirm or deny this information.

The roundtable at its first day focused on economic aspects of relationships between Kyiv and Simferopol. During the second day legal and political issues were discussed, firstly, approval of Crimean Constitution by Parliament of Ukraine. According to Danelian, "the

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roundtable helped to find mutual understanding between Ukrainian and Crimean sides."

To approve Crimean Constitution as soon as possible, probably, in 10-day period, it was proposed exclude from a text of the Constitution some arguable provisions and discuss them later. According to Danelian, Supreme Commissar of the OSCE on national minorities Max van der Stoel intends to send to Ukrainian leadership in a week's time the recommendations of the roundtable.

Ukraine: Official Discusses Tatar Resettlement With UN Envoy

AU2003120996 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 16 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In 1996 it is planned to channel 4 trillion 200 billion karbovantsi from Ukraine's state budget for resettling deported Crimean Tatars and persons of other nationalities, who are returning to their homeland. It is a large sum. However, these funds are insufficient.

The question of enlisting the help of donor countries for giving assistance to deported people was discussed at the meeting between Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister Vasyl Durdynets and UN representative in Ukraine Stephen Brown. The international community is becoming increasingly involved in accommodating the new arrivals, especially in the Crimea. Great hopes are pinned in this connection upon the conference of the donor countries in Geneva to which representatives of 54 states and 20 international organizations have been invited.

Ukraine: Crimean Prime Minister Uses Ex-KGB, Intelligence Officers

AU2003110896 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 15 Mar 96 p 4

[Unattributed report from the Crimea: "Former Special Service Officers Unite"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arkadiy Demydenko, prime minister of the Crimean Autonomous Republic, has characterized the association of former special service officers "Yednist" [Unity] as one of the factors that must counterbalance the unfavorable development of events on the peninsula. The association protects the interests of almost 6,000 former officers of the KGB, Ukraine's Security Service, and intelligence who reside on the peninsula.

As retired Colonel Ihor Zinchenko, head of the association's council, said, the association's goal in 1996 has been to strengthen ties with analogous organizations in Ukraine and in other CIS countries, protect former officers of special services, create a credits union of the association members, and help them adjust to market conditions.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: 1995 Socioeconomic Statistics

964K0086A Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 8 Feb 96 pp 5-7

[Report of the Ministry of Statistics of Ukraine under the rubric "Guide. Supplement to URYADOVYY KURYER: Documents, Commentaries": "The Socioeconomic State of Ukraine in 1995. Report of the Ministry of Statistics"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The general economic situation in the country is characterized by a certain slowing down of the rate of decline of social production. The steps taken to bring about macroeconomic stabilization helped to create conditions for further economic reforms. At the same time, however, the socioeconomic state remains difficult and unstable.

The gross domestic product fell 11.8 percent in 1995 as compared with the preceding year.

INDUSTRY

Industrial production decreased 11.5 percent in 1995 as against 1994, including the volume of consumer goods, which shrank 19.1 percent (in 1994—27.3 and 25 percent, respectively).

Output volumes dropped in all principal sectors of industry and in all oblasts (with the exception of Ivano-Frankivsk, Mykolayiv, and Odessa Oblasts). Almost three-quarters of all industrial enterprises decreased output.

The output of most principal products fell, as indicated by the following data:

Electric power, billion kwh—192—95
Oil, including gas condensate, thousand metric tons—4,009—96
Natural gas, billion cubic meters—18.1—99
Coal, million metric tons—83.6—89
Iron ore (marketable), million metric tons—50.4—99
Cast iron, million metric tons—18—89
Steel, million metric tons—22.3—93
Finished rolled metal, million metric tons—16.5—98
Steel pipes, thousand metric tons—1,583—93
Large electrical machinery, units—274—68
Metal-cutting lathes, units—5,737—68
Excavators, units—2,184—78
Motorized cranes, units—585—33

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Trucks, units—6,492—55
Passenger cars, thousand units—59.8—64
Feed harvesting combines, units—316—30
Tractors, thousand units—10.4—65
Tractor-drawn high-speed windrowers, units—1,043—20
Synthetic ammonia, thousand metric tons—3,782—104
Sulphuric acid, thousand metric tons—1,580—96
Soda ash, thousand metric tons—475—72
Mineral fertilizers, thousand metric tons—2,222—95
Chemical fibers and thread, thousand metric tons—41.3—88
Tires, thousand units—5,777—86
Lumber, thousand cubic meters—2,662—85
Wood-chip sheets, thousand standard cubic meters—377—70
Wood-fiber sheets, million standard cubic meters—14.4—80
Paper, thousand metric tons—98—104
Cardboard, thousand metric tons—206—99
Cement, thousand metric tons—7,634—67
Asbestos cement sheets (slate), million standard tiles—530—74
Asbestos cement pipes and sleeves, kilometers of standard pipes—1,758—86
Soft roofing materials and insulation, million square meters—65.3—98
Construction bricks, million units of standard bricks—4,231—69
Precast reinforced concrete structures and parts, thousand cubic meters—5,594—66
Meat, including category-1 subproducts, thousand metric tons—846—65
Sausage products, thousand metric tons—264—60
Whole milk products, thousand metric tons—1,103—54
Butter, thousand metric tons—219—87
Cooking oil, thousand metric tons—684—108
Bread and bakery products, thousand metric tons—3,848—84
Flour, thousand metric tons—5,104—89
Groats, thousand metric tons—473—78
Macaroni products, thousand metric tons—214—85
Textiles, million square meters—168—59
Knitted goods, million units—27.8—41
Hosiery, million pairs—113—70
Footwear, million pairs—20.5—51
Television sets, thousand units—217—28
including color television sets—59.3—17
Refrigerators, thousand units—554—85
Radio receivers, thousand units—119—40
Tape recorders, thousand units—105—48
Washing machines, thousand units—212—50
Electric vacuum cleaners, thousand units—285—71

In December 1995, the wholesale prices of industrial goods increased 2.7-fold as compared with December 1994. The highest price increases occurred in the machine-building industry, where they increased 3.8-fold, and in the timber, woodworking, and pulp and paper industry—by a factor of 3.3. Prices in the fuel, chemical and petrochemical, and ferrous metallurgy industries rose 2.3- to 2.5- fold.

Wholesale prices rose unevenly during the year. Thus, as compared with the preceding month, in January prices rose 29.2 percent, in March—9.3 percent, in June—8.6 percent, in September—9.9 percent, and in December—2.6 percent.

At the beginning of 1996, the principal fuel consumers had 2.8 million metric tons of coal reserves and 1.2 million metric tons of furnace oil, or 38 and 6 percent more, respectively, than at the beginning of 1995.

The coal that remained for coking at ferrous metallurgy enterprises amounted to 280,000 metric tons, or enough to allow the sector to operate for five days.

The use in the national economy of recyclable resources continued to decrease, but there was an increase in the use of steel-smelting slags, lignin, calcareosulfurous wastes, grain and potato distillery wastes, and certain other kinds of secondary raw materials.

In 1995, 150 of the 206 tasks set by the state contract for scientific-technical production in priority fields in the development of science and technology were executed. More than three-quarters of the tasks were not carried out because the funds allocated were insufficient or lacking altogether. Those involved in carrying out the tasks were 28 organizations of the National Academy of Sciences, 13 of the Ukrainian Academy of Agrarian Sciences, nine of the Ministry of Education, eight of the Ministry of Machine Building Industry, and others.

Interest on the part of enterprises in introducing innovations has continued to decline in recent years. The percentage of enterprises engaged in raising the technical level of production dropped from 26 percent in 1994 to 23 percent in 1995. Of the 2,002 enterprises that made innovations in 1995, 4.2 percent (5.1 percent in 1994) were engaged in fully mechanizing and automating production units, shops, production systems; 15.3 percent (16.6 percent)—in setting up the production of new kinds of machinery, equipment, mechanisms; 36.5 percent (40.6 percent)—in introducing new technological processes. More than two-thirds of the enterprises that introduced innovations were state-owned and joint-stock companies; 10.7 percent were leased enterprises. Almost all the indicators of their innovational activity

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fell. Thus, the number of fully mechanized and automated production units, shops, and production systems decreased 20.3 percent, and the number of new kinds of products put into production dropped 12.8 percent, including consumer goods by 14.5 percent. Only one in 12 of the surveyed enterprise introduced new technological processes.

AGRICULTURE

The output volume of agriculture in 1995 decreased 4 percent as compared with the preceding year, with the output of farms in the social sector falling 8 percent. According to preliminary estimates, more than 3,000 enterprises, or 24 percent of the total number, will end 1995 with losses.

Agricultural producers obtained a total of 33.9 million metric tons of grain after finishing their harvesting, or 96 percent of the amount obtained in 1994. Grain yield per hectare of harvested area amounted to 24.4 quintals as against 26.8 quintals in 1994. The output of food grain (17.5 million metric tons) increased 18 percent as against last year. The output of sunflower seeds was nearly double the amount produced in the preceding year (2.9 million metric tons); the output of sugar beets (factory beets) amounted to 29.4 million metric tons (4.5 percent more than in 1994) and that of vegetables to 5.9 million metric tons (13.9 percent more). The output of fruit and berry crops (1,837,000 metric tons) increased more than 1.5-fold, that of grapes by 14 percent (452,000 metric tons). The amount of potatoes produced dropped 9 percent and totalled 14.6 million metric tons.

In 1995, grain procurement enterprises received 5.8 million metric tons of grain (including the loan repayment), which equalled 53 percent of the amount received last year; only half the state contract was carried out. Procurement organizations, processing enterprises, and consumers through direct purchases received 146,000 metric tons of potatoes (57 percent less than in the preceding year), 446,000 metric tons of vegetables (47 percent less), 188,000 metric tons of fruit (11 percent less), and 145,000 metric tons of grapes (15 percent less). Sugar refineries received the entire amount of harvested crop on a customer-supplied basis.

Winter crops for seed and green chop to be harvested in 1996 were sown on an area of 7.9 million hectares (89 percent of the planned area), including 7 million hectares (89 percent) for seed. Fall plowing of winter fallow was conducted on 8.7 million hectares of land (62 percent).

On 1 January 1996, there were 17.6 million head of neat cattle in all categories of farms, or 10 percent less than on 1 January 1995. There were 7.5 million head of cows (4 percent less), 13.1 million head of pigs (6 percent less), 4.1 million head of sheep and goats (27 percent less), and 153.7 million head of poultry (7 percent less) of all kinds.

Farms in all categories produced 2.3 million metric tons of meat in slaughter weight, which was 13 percent less than in 1994, 17.2 million metric tons of milk (5 percent less), 9.4 billion eggs (7 percent less), and 13,900 metric tons of wool (28 percent less). A large decline in the number of head of cattle and in the output of livestock products occurred at farms in the social sector, where the number of head of neat cattle fell 13 percent, that of cows—9 percent, pigs—12 percent, sheep and goats—by more than one-third, poultry of all kinds—16 percent. These farms produced 26 percent less meat, 14 percent less milk, 11 percent less eggs, and 33 percent less wool. Farms in the private sector produced 2 percent more meat, 7 percent more milk, and 4 percent less eggs; the number of head of neat cattle remained the same as in the preceding year, while that of cows increased 5 percent and of pigs, 2 percent.

Livestock productivity remains low. The average live weight of one head of neat cattle sold to the state in 1995 was 333 kg as against 351 kg in 1994, of pigs—102 kg as against 106 kg; average milk yield per cow was 1,902 kg as against 2,027 kg; the number of eggs laid per chicken was 171 as against 162 eggs in 1994.

Procurement and processing enterprises were sold 1.1 million metric tons of cattle and poultry in live weight, which was 41 percent less than in 1994, 6.1 million metric tons of milk and dairy products (27 percent less), 2.1 billion eggs (24 percent less). At the same time, the volume of livestock products sold through other channels grew significantly. Farm-owned stores, stalls, and pavilions accounted for 34 percent of the sales volume of eggs, 23 percent of livestock and poultry, and 7 percent of milk and dairy products. Nearly three times as much milk and dairy products were sold under barter arrangements than last year and double the amount of livestock and poultry.

The prices of agricultural products sold to procurement and processing enterprises quadrupled as against 1994, with the prices of plant agriculture output increasing 3.8-fold and those of animal husbandry—4.5-fold.

CONSTRUCTION

In 1995 builders put into operation 31 production and nine environmental projects and capacities provided for in the State Program for Economic and Social Development. These include capacities for mining 100,000 metric tons of coal, for the production of 5,000 metric tons

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of glass fiber, 1,500 metric tons of iron castings, 500 units of bridges for buses and trolley buses, 300,000 metric tons of sheeting, 38 million standard asbestos-cement tiles, 30 million standard bricks, 2.5 million standard cans of canned fruits and vegetables; 46 gas wells were put into operation, 14 kilometers of subways lines, 57 kilometers of gas pipelines, 32 kilometers of water pipes, 20 kilometers of water distribution systems, 1.1 kilometers of sewage systems, a purification plant to handle 11,800 cubic meters of sewage per day; 25 kilometers of railroad track were electrified, and other projects.

However, the state program has been executed only by 22 percent. The principal reason for this was insufficient and delayed financing.

In addition to the projects and capacities included in the State Program, a number of other capacities were put into operation.

The construction of projects in the social sphere continued. Nearly 111,000 apartments were built and residential buildings with total living space measuring more than 8 million square meters were put into operation, which was 16 percent less than in 1994. Nearly half of the total area of residential buildings was put into operation by private builders, 37 percent by state-owned enterprises and organizations, 19 percent by those with a collective form of ownership, of which eight were joint-stock companies and three were residential housing construction cooperatives.

Put into operation were general-education institutions to accommodate 55,100 students, preschool institutions for 6,700 children, vocational training institutions for 1,200 students, hospitals totalling 2,400 beds, outpatient and polyclinic institutions to accommodate 9,000 patients per shift, and clubs and buildings of culture to accommodate 4,400 people. Compared with 1994, more outpatient and polyclinic institutions were put into operation, but fewer general-education schools, vocational training institutions, preschool and hospital facilities, and clubs and buildings of culture.

The annual contracts for putting into operation residential buildings were carried out by 79 percent, clubs and buildings of culture—24 percent, and other projects in the social sphere—by 55 to 84 percent. The proportion of projects in the social sphere put into operation in rural localities ranges from 12 to 46 percent, and clubs and buildings of culture—84 percent.

Funds allocated for the construction of projects to eliminate the effects of the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station were spent to put into operation residential buildings totalling 154,600 square meters of living space (68 percent of all contracts for the year), general-education institutions for 7,600 students (64 percent), preschool institutions for 475 children (59 percent), hospitals totalling 696 beds (86 percent), outpatient and polyclinic institutions to accommodate 850 visits per shift (32 percent), water supply and gas supply systems—253.3 and 813.4 kilometers (92 and 71 percent), respectively.

As result of this construction, the value of capital stock increased by 401 trillion karbovantsi. Capital investments amounted to 797 trillion karbovantsi, which was 35 percent less than in 1994.

Investments in the construction of enterprises and organizations in the state sector amounted to 520 trillion karbovantsi (65 percent of the total amount), in collectively owned enterprises—237 trillion (30 percent), and in privately owned enterprises—40 trillion karbovantsi (5 percent).

Centralized capital investments amounted to 198 trillion karbovantsi, or one-quarter of the total amount, of which 84 trillion (43 percent) was spent on construction in the production sphere.

The proportion of capital investments into the development of the production sphere increased by three percentage points. The largest amounts of investments used to create fixed production capital were made by leased enterprises—76 percent, joint-stock enterprises—67 percent, state-owned enterprises—61 percent, and agricultural collectives—54 percent.

Nearly 180 trillion karbovantsi of capital investments were spent on the construction of projects in the agro-industrial complex, which was 36 percent less than in the preceding year.

Building organization performed contract jobs valued at 481.7 trillion karbovantsi in current prices, which was 35 percent less in comparable prices than in 1994.

The prices of construction and installation work in December 1995 compared with the preceding month increased 14 percent, compared with December 1994—5.94-fold, and on the average in 1995 as compared with 1994—6.67-fold.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The amount of freight hauled by all types of common carrier in 1995 totalled 795 million metric tons, or 15 percent less than in 1994. Motor and water transport experienced the greatest decreases in freight hauls. Data on volumes of freight hauls by individual forms of transport are cited below:

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1995

Form of transport—Million metric tons—Percentage of 1994
Railroad—360—88
Motor—165—68
River—13—65
Sea—21—80
Pipeline—236—97

The volumes of grain and the products of the grind and scrap of ferrous metals shipped by railroad increased. There was a decrease in shipments of coal (by 9 percent), oil and oil products, timber, chemical and mineral fertilizers (by 10 percent each), iron and manganese ore (by 3 percent), coke (by 2 percent), ferrous metals (by 11 percent), and cement (by 36 percent). The total value of freight hauled by railroad during the year increased 6.2-fold.

On the average, only 28 percent of the registered number of motor vehicles were used to haul freight by motor transport; over half the trucks in good working order stood idle: 24 percent for lack of freight, 15 percent for lack of drivers, and 14 percent for lack of fuel.

Shipping by sea decreased markedly for reasons that included the arrest of many ships in foreign ports, the leasing of vessels, and others. At the same time, the volume of freight handled in commercial seaports increased 9 percent, primarily because of through shipments, and amounted to 40 million metric tons. The number of foreign-owned and foreign-dispatched ships increased by one-third and totalled 7,000.

One-third less freight was hauled by self-propelled river transport in 1995 than in 1994, primarily due to a sharp drop in the shipping of building materials, which account for more than half of the total volume. The percentage of foreign hauls made by the fleet of the Ukrrichflot [Ukrainian River Fleet] Joint-Stock Shipping Company rose from 12 to 25 percent. Among the cargo transported to foreign destinations, ferrous metals (21 percent) and all kinds of ores (25 percent) predominated.

The through shipment of oil by pipeline dropped by 1 percent and that of natural gas increased by 6 percent; in the total volume of pipage this accounts for 77 and 66 percent, respectively (in 1994— 74 and 60 percent). The greatest decrease (twofold) occurred in the transporting of oil products, which was the result of reduced output by oil refineries.

The traffic volume on passenger transport was 103 billion passenger-kilometers, which was 10 percent less than in 1994. Passenger services worsened. Thus, in addition to the fact that the number of suburban trains dispatched was reduced by 29,000, there were 15,000 delays averaging half an hour. Every eighth long-distance passenger train reached its destination on the average 42 minutes behind schedule. Regularity of flight departures from airports was not maintained, with every sixth airplane averaging a delay of 1.5 hours. Due to mechanical problems and the lack of fuel, only 46 percent of the registered number of passenger buses operated.

Public communications enterprises provided services valued at 135 trillion karbovantsi, with 29 percent of these services going to the general public. During the year, 228,000 primary home telephones were installed, or 3 percent more than in 1994. The number of urban and rural pay phones fell 3 percent.

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKET RELATIONS

The destatization of enterprise property in industry is continuing. The percentage of state-owned industrial enterprises dropped from 53 percent in 1994 to 44 percent in 1995. Their share in the total volume of industrial production fell, respectively, from 62 to 52 percent.

At the end of 1995, there were more than 5,000 enterprises operating in the nonstate sector of industry; of these, every second enterprise was a joint-stock company and every fifth, a leased enterprise. Joint-stock companies produced goods valued at 1,780 trillion karbovantsi, accounting for 68 percent of the output of the nonstate sector.

In construction, organizations in the nonstate sector carried out 71 percent of the total volume of contract jobs, of which 48 percent were performed by joint-stock companies.

In the services sphere, as in past years, the state sector predominated, its share amounting to more than three-quarters of the total volume of paid services and nearly half the consumer services. Privately owned enterprises accounted for only 0.4 percent of the total volume of paid services and 2.3 percent of consumer services.

The number of peasant (private) farms increased during the year by 2,704 and on 1 January 1996 totalled 34,700. They had the use of 789,000 hectares of agricultural lands, including 718,000 hectares of plowed fields.

In the agrarian sector, a total of 564 state agricultural enterprises have been privatized, including 486 farms that produce agricultural goods (86 percent of all privatized agricultural enterprises). In 1995, 321 agricultural enterprises were destatized and privatized; of these,

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303 farms are engaged in the production of agricultural goods.

The privatization of the state housing fund is continuing. During this period, more than 2.6 million apartments and single-dwelling buildings with a total living space of 103.4 million square meters were privatized. This constitutes 37 percent of the state housing fund. In 1995, 548,500 apartments (buildings) with a total living space of 27.1 million square meters passed into private ownership.

As before, the overwhelming majority of apartments and buildings (499,100, or 91 percent) were transferred into the ownership of private citizens free of charge and accompanied by housing checks to compensate for insufficient living space.

FOREIGN TRADE

In January-November 1995, enterprises, institutions, and organizations were engaged in foreign trade operations with partners in 147 countries. Foreign trade turnover amounted to nearly $20 billion (106 percent as against the corresponding period in 1994). Of this amount, exports accounted for $10.2 billion (110 percent) and imports for $9.8 billion (101 percent). The foreign trade balance remained positive and amounted to $459.5 million.

The share of exports to countries of the former USSR was 53 percent, to other countries—47 percent (over 11 months of 1994—58 and 42 percent, respectively).

The largest shipments of exports were made to the Russian Federation—43.1 percent of the total export volume, to the U.S — 4.9 percent, to Germany—4.1 percent, to Belarus—3.6 percent, to China—3.5 percent, to Switzerland—2.3 percent, to Great Britain and Turkmenistan—1.9 percent each, to India and Turkey—1.8 percent each.

No significant changes occurred in the composition of exports: ferrous metals and goods manufactured from these metals accounted for 34.2 percent of the total export volume, the output of the chemical industry and associated industries—12.3 percent, electrical and mechanical machinery and equipment—12 percent, ground transportation means (including railroad transport)—6.7 percent, ores and their concentrates—5.4 percent, mineral fuels and oil products—4.5 percent, sugar and its products—4.3 percent.

The share of imports from countries of the former USSR was 66 percent, that of imports from other countries—34 percent; in the 11 months of the preceding year—75 and 25 percent, respectively. The largest amounts of goods were imported from the Russian Federation— 52.3 percent of the total volume of imports, Turkmenistan—7.8 percent, Germany—5.3 percent, Switzerland—2.6 percent, Belarus and the U.S.—2.5 percent each, Great Britain—2.3 percent, Ireland and Poland—2.1 percent each.

The following commodity groups made up the principal imports: mineral fuels, oil and the products of oil refining—54.8 percent of the country's total import volume (including natural gas—32.4 percent), electrical and mechanical machinery and equipment—15.2 percent, the output of the chemical industry and associated industries—8.6 percent, ferrous metals and products manufactured from these metals—3 percent, ground transportation means (including railroad transport)—2.5 percent.

Barter operations accounted for 29.9 percent of the total export volume, including 19.1 percent to countries of the former USSR and 10.8 percent to other countries. The following commodity groups made up the principal exports in barter operations: ferrous metals and products manufactured from these metals—27.7 percent of the total barter volume, ores and their concentrates—10.2 percent, transportation means—8.5 percent, sugar and confectionery products—7.3 percent, rubber and rubber products—6.7 percent, mechanical machinery and equipment—5 percent, organic chemical compounds—4 percent. The largest amounts of exports under barter arrangements went to the Russian Federation—15.7 percent of the total export volume, Belarus—1.4 percent, the U.S.—1.3 percent, Germany—1 percent, Turkmenistan—0.7 percent.

Barter operations accounted for 23 percent of the total volume of imports, of which nearly 40 percent were mineral fuels, oil and oil products, 16.6 percent—electrical and mechanical machinery and equipment, 4.4 percent—ores and their concentrates, 6.9 percent—rubber and rubber products. The bulk of imports came from the Russian Federation—11.5 percent, Belarus—1.1 percent, Turkmenistan, Germany, and the U.S.—0.8 percent each, China—0.2 percent of the country's total import volume.

Of the total volume of commodity export-import, exports of customer-supplied raw materials were valued at $42.3 million and imports—$1.029 billion; in terms of the goods manufactured from these materials: exports—$862.4 million, imports—$86.1 million. Ukraine was engaged in foreign trade operations involving customer-supplied raw materials with 68 countries. Large volumes of raw materials were supplied by intermediary and commercial firms in the Russian Federation—15.7 percent, Germany—9.7 percent, Great Britain—9 percent, and Switzerland—7.7 percent of the total volume

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of imports of customer-supplied raw materials. The principal partners that processed Ukrainian raw materials were Germany—30.3 percent, the Russian Federation—15.7 percent, Poland—6.8 percent, Belarus—6 percent, Hungary and Italy—3.7 percent each, Great Britain—4.6 percent.

The largest volumes of products manufactured in Ukraine from customer-supplied raw materials were exported to the Russian Federation—36.9 percent of total exports of finished products, the U.S.—10.5 percent, Germany—10 percent, Great Britain—5.5 percent, Italy—3.7 percent, Ireland—3 percent. At the same time, of the finished products manufactured from Ukrainian raw materials imported back to Ukraine, those from Germany accounted for 22.8 percent, Belgium—14.2 percent, Ireland—13 percent, the Russian Federation— 12.4 percent, Poland—6.2 percent, and Great Britain—4.4 percent of the total import volume of finished products.

FINANCES

The deficit of the consolidated budget for 1995 (according to preliminary data from the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine) reached 356.4 trillion karbovantsi (6.7 percent of the gross domestic product) and increased 3.3-fold over the year.

In 1995, domestic bank credits to cover the budget deficit amounted to 294.3 trillion karbovantsi, while external sources of financing amounted to 79.3 trillion karbovantsi.

Accounting for the largest share in consolidated budget revenues, which amounted to 2.0922 quadrillion karbovantsi, were enterprise and organization profits taxes—23.1 percent (483.4 trillion karbovantsi) and value-added taxes—21.6 percent (451.7 trillion karbovantsi). Excise duties brought in 40.1 trillion karbovantsi, or 1.9 percent, income taxes—160.1 trillion karbovantsi, or 7.7 percent, of the total volume of revenues.

A large percentage of budget revenues consisted of income into the Pension Fund—416 trillion karbovantsi (19.9 percent) and contributions to the Fund To Eliminate the Effects of the Chernobyl Catastrophe—102.6 trillion karbovantsi (4.9 percent). At the same time, proceeds from the privatization of the property of state-owned enterprises accounted for 0.4 percent of total revenues, or 7.5 trillion karbovantsi (8.2 percent of the planned amount). Consolidated budget expenditures totalled 2.4486 quadrillion karbovantsi (in the fourth quarter, expenditures amounted to 882 trillion karbovantsi, or 36 percent of the year's expenditures).

Outlays for the national economy (including housing and municipal services and road management) amounted to 329.5 trillion karbovantsi, or 13.5 percent of total expenditures, for social and cultural measures—947.8 trillion (38.7 percent), for administration—139.1 trillion (5.7 percent), for defense—101.7 trillion karbovantsi (4.2 percent).

Pension Fund expenditures totalled 408.6 trillion karbovantsi, which was 7.4 trillion karbovantsi less than the amount received into the fund in revenues. A similar situation existed with respect to outlays to eliminate the effects of the Chernobyl catastrophe— the positive balance amounted to 7.7 trillion karbovantsi. In addition, 4.9 trillion karbovantsi, or 97.7 percent of the planned sum, was spent in 1995 on the indexation of private savings at the institutions of the Savings Bank.

The state budget of Ukraine had a deficit of 366.3 trillion karbovantsi. Revenues into the state budget in the amount of 1.2433 quadrillion karbovantsi (including relations with local budgets) consisted primarily of Pension Fund income (33.8 percent of all revenues), value-added taxes (12.5 percent, or 153.5 trillion karbovantsi), and enterprise and organization profits taxes (10.7 percent, or 131.6 trillion karbovantsi).

Constituting the largest portion of the expenditures of the state budget, which totalled 1.6096 quadrillion karbovantsi, were Pension Fund outlays—27.3 percent, and outlays for the national economy— 15.2 percent (228.3 trillion karbovantsi). Outlays for social and cultural measures amounted to 172.2 trillion karbovantsi, or 11.5 percent of total expenditures.

According to preliminary data, in 1995 Ukraine's enterprises and organizations earned 1.6897 quadrillion karbovantsi in profits, of which 832.2 trillion karbovantsi was earned by industrial entities. Compared with the preceding year, profits increased 3.3-fold, primarily due to a rise in prices. In industry, where wholesale prices increased nearly sixfold, profits tripled.

During the year, every fifth enterprise was loss-making; total losses amounted to 126.6 trillion karbovantsi (in 1994 every ninth enterprise was loss-making and losses totalled 70 trillion karbovantsi). The largest number of such enterprises and organizations were in the housing and municipal services sector and in the sphere of consumer services.

The amount of credit invested by the banking system in the economy of Ukraine remaining on 1 January 1996 totalled 617.8 trillion karbovantsi and increased during 1995 by a factor of 2.4.

The volume of credit extended by commercial banks over the year amounted to 303.4 trillion karbovantsi, or 49.1 percent of the total amount; of these, short-term loans amounted to 267 trillion karbovantsi. The

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National Bank accounted for 50.9 percent, or 314.4 trillion karbovantsi [of the total credit volume].

There was a discernible trend on the part of commercial banks to extend fewer long-term loans. Their share in the total volume of loans dropped from 14.7 percent on 1 January 1995 to 10.3 percent on 1 October; in the fourth quarter, their share increased and on 1 January 1996 measured 12 percent.

Overdue payments by enterprises and organizations on 1 January 1996 totalled 1.1342 quadrillion karbovantsi and had increased 6.7- fold over the year. Of the total amount of overdue payments, obligations on clearing operations between enterprises and organizations accounted for 96.6 percent (1.0955 quadrillion karbovantsi) and obligations on bank loans for 3.4 percent (38.7 trillion karbovantsi).

Debt and credit obligations on 1 December amounted to 2.264 quadrillion and 3.010 quadrillion karbovantsi, respectively. Interenterprise arrears in Ukraine included 97.2 percent (2.200 quadrillion karbovantsi) of debt obligations and 94 percent (2.828 quadrillion karbovantsi) of credit obligations. Interenterprise arrears between Ukraine's business entities and those of the former republics of the USSR consisted of debt and credit obligations amounting to 64 and 182 trillion karbovantsi, respectively, of which 57 and 162 trillion karbovantsi, or nearly 90 percent, was with Russia.

The interenterprise debt balance decreased 4.2 percent. A positive balance was achieved with Armenia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Uzbekistan. At the same time, the negative balance with Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, and Kyrgyzstan increased.

PERSONAL INCOMES AND PRICES

Personal monetary income amounted to 2.370 quadrillion karbovantsi, or 176 trillion karbovantsi more than personal spending.

The average monthly per capita monetary income (according to data from surveys of family budgets) in 1995 amounted to 4.028 million karbovantsi, monetary expenditures—3.851 million karbovantsi. Compared with 1994, monetary incomes and expenditures increased 4.6- fold, of which spending on food products increased 4.4-fold, on nonfood consumer items—4.1-fold, and on services—7.3-fold.

Nominal wages of blue- and white-collar workers increased 3.7- fold over the year and in December amounted to 12.25 million karbovantsi, or an average of 7.328 million per month, which was 5.3-fold more than in 1994.

In addition to wages, enterprises, institutions, and organizations paid out in the form of material assistance and social benefits 699,000 karbovantsi per month (on the average per employee); in industry this amount was 961,000 karbovantsi. Income in the form of dividends, interest accrued on stocks and investments in enterprises averaged 106,000 karbovantsi per month, or 6.2-fold more than in 1994.

The rate of growth of nominal wages throughout 1995 exceeded the rate of price increases (except in January and September), as a result of which real wages increased 28 percent over the year.

The average monthly wage in collective agricultural enterprises amounted to 3.4 million karbovantsi, which was 3.1-fold more than in the preceding year.

The prices of consumer goods and services increased 2.8-fold in 1995 as against fivefold in 1994.

The rise in the prices and rates of paid services exceeded the rise in the prices of food and nonfood products more than twofold. Prices and rates did not rise at an even rate throughout the year. Following January, which had the highest rate of consumer price increases in 1995 (21.2 percent), this rate began to decrease monthly with indicators of 4.6, 4.8, 5.2, and 4.6 percent for May through August, respectively. In September, this trend broke and the inflation rate was 14.6 percent, primarily due to increases in the rates for housing and municipal services. From October onward, the inflation rate began to decrease gradually, dropping to 4.6 percent in December.

Among food products, the highest increases in 1995 occurred in the prices of fruit—3.9-fold, bread and bakery products—3.3-fold, salt—threefold, meat and poultry, sugar, flour, groats, and legumes—more than 2.5-fold. Among nonfood consumer items, there were increases in the prices of printed publications—3.8-fold, toilet soap—3.4-fold, children's shoes, medicines and dressing materials, and building materials—threefold. The highest rises in the prices and rates of paid services occurred in housing and municipal services, in particular, for heating—12.1-fold, water— 10.2-fold, rent in state-owned buildings—7.9-fold, natural gas—15.3-fold, and electric power—11.1-fold. In addition, there was a significant increase in the cost to parents for tuition at preschool institutions (5.8-fold). Passenger transportation fares increased 4.6-fold, the cost of cultural services—4.2-fold.

Between May and December 1995, 1,504,500 families applied to the services that grant subsidies to compensate for the costs of housing and municipal services; subsidies were granted to 82 percent of these applicants

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(1,235,300), including to 999,800 (82 percent) urban applicants and 235,500 (82 percent) rural applicants.

The total amount granted in subsidies was 1.7667 trillion karbovantsi, of which 1.3591 trillion went to urban residents and 407.6 billion karbovantsi to rural residents. In addition, in August-December 1995, 210,500 families applied for subsidies to compensate for the cost of buying condensed gas and solid fuel. Subsidies were granted to 172,200 families (82 percent) totalling 1.1469 trillion karbovantsi. The recipients were 73,100 urban families (80 percent), who received 485.5 billion karbovantsi, and 99,100 were rural families (83 percent), who received 661.4 billion karbovantsi. The average subsidy per family amounted to 6.7 million karbovantsi: 6.6 million in urban settlements and 6.7 million karbovantsi in rural settlements.

EMPLOYMENT AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

In January 1995 the State Employment Service registered 526,900 citizens without jobs, of whom 175,700 were granted unemployed status (33.3 percent), or 18.2 percent and 32.8 percent more, respectively, than in 1994. With the assistance of the employment services, 229,700 jobless citizens found work during the year, or 13.6 percent more than during the preceding year.

In the second half of the year, the imbalance between manpower supply and demand increased. Thus, as compared with the first half of the year, when on the average close to 11,000 jobless persons registered each month, the number of persons registering per month in the second half of the year rose to 18,200, and in December reached 25,100 persons.

By the end of December the number of registered jobless reached 161,300 persons and exceeded demand by a factor of 1.87. The number of vacancies reported by enterprises dropped from 136,600 at the beginning of the year to 86,400 at the end of the year.

Of the 126,900 jobless persons who were registered with the employment service at the end of the year, 72.7 percent were women, 37.3 percent were young people under 28 years, and every third person had been laid off in connection with changes in the organization of production.

The level of officially registered unemployment rose 0.16 percent in the second half of the year and at the end of December represented 0.46 percent of the able-bodied population of working age.

In 1995, the State Employment Fund paid out 958 billion karbovantsi in unemployment benefits, which averaged 20 percent of the average monthly wage in the national economy.

On 1 January 1996 (according to preliminary estimates), the population numbered 51.3 million.

The process of natural population decrease continued and numbered nearly 300,000 persons. The birth rate fell and measured 9.6 births per 1,000, while the mortality rate rose, measuring 15.4 deaths per 1,000 (in 1994—10 and 14.7, respectively).

The number of emigrants from Ukraine exceeded the number of immigrants (according to preliminary data) by 94,000 persons (in 1994—by 143,200 persons).

The sickness rate is rising. There was an explosive spread of HIV infection, predominantly among intravenous drug users.

Between June and October there were 525 reported cases of cholera in a number of oblasts, 10 of which resulted in death. An influenza epidemic was recorded in December.

Diphtheria, tuberculosis of the respiratory organs, and syphilis remained significant problems.

THE GOODS AND SERVICES CONSUMER MARKET

The total volume of retail trade turnover, turnover at city markets, and of paid services provided to consumers in 1995 amounted to 1.712 quadrillion karbovantsi, or in comparable prices 86.7 percent as against the preceding year. The share of each in this volume measured 67, 12, and 21 percent, respectively, as against 75, 12, and 13 percent in 1994.

The volume of retail trade turnover in 1995 amounted to 1.149 quadrillion karbovantsi and in current prices increased by a factor of 3.6. In comparable prices, it dropped 13.2 percent.

Sales of food products during this period fell 22 percent in comparable prices, of which sugar, canned vegetable and fruit baby foods, butter, potatoes, groats and legumes, sausage and smoked goods, canned meats, cheese and goat cheese, eggs, oil, meat, and poultry decreased by 53-34 percent; margarine and margarine products, confectionery and macaroni products, vegetables, canned fish products, mineral water, flour, bread and bakery products, fruit, berries, watermelon, melons, and tea—by 33-11 percent.

Sales of nonfood consumer items increased overall by 3 percent. Significantly more computers were sold (3.5-fold more), fuel and lubricants (2.4-fold), gasoline, office and school supplies, perfumes and cosmetics (by

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89 to 33 percent); sales of photographic and film products, agricultural machinery and orchard and gardening equipment, passenger cars, rubber footwear, electrical products, household chemical products, natural furs and products made of them, and carpets and carpet products increased by 29-10 percent.

There were decreases in the sales of motorcycles and bicycles, headwear, woolen fabrics and kerchiefs, musical instruments, cotton fabrics, household and toilet soap (by 51-41 percent); fabrics made of linen, jute, and other plant fibers, knitted underwear, electrical fixtures and lamps, toys and Christmas tree decorations, thread, haberdashery articles, jewelry, metal cooking utensils, watches, knitted cloth (by 38-27 percent); synthetic detergents, hosiery, leather footwear, television and radio sets, silk fabrics, felt footwear, white-paper goods, furniture, knitted outerwear, building materials (by 25-13 percent).

On 1 December 1995 trade organizations had put away for long-term storage 108,000 metric tons, or 41 percent of the yearly target, of potatoes, 179,400 metric tons and 52 percent, respectively, of vegetables, and 18,100 metric tons and 32 percent, respectively, of seed-bearing plants; compared with 1994, the laid away amounts of these products were smaller by 49, 42, and 39 percent, respectively.

In 1995, 9 percent more agricultural products were sold at city markets than in the preceding year: 2 percent more products of plant agriculture and 15 percent more of animal husbandry. Prices in general rose by a factor of 3.6, including those of plant agriculture products—3.3-fold (potatoes—6.1-fold, fruit—threefold, vegetables—2.9-fold), and of livestock husbandry— fourfold (dairy products—4.2-fold, meat products—fourfold, and eggs—3.6-fold).

Paid services were sold to the population in the amount of 364 trillion karbovantsi. This amount exceeded the 1994 level by a factor of 6.5 in current prices, but was 33.6 percent lower in comparable prices. The volume of consumer services sold during the year amounted to 35.6 trillion karbovantsi, or 6.5-fold more in current prices than in the preceding year and 18 percent less in comparable prices. The share of consumer services in the total volume of paid services is constantly falling and in 1995 measured 10 percent as against 16 percent in 1994.

THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Twenty cases of extremely high pollution of the environment were recorded in 1995: 11 instances of surface-water pollution, three of the surface of the land, and six of the sea.

Twenty-seven cases of high levels of air pollution (five times the highest permissible concentration and over) were recorded in nine of the 53 cities in which permanent monitoring was conducted. These cases involved six pollutants: nitric dioxide, dust, hydrogen sulfide, benzene, ethyl benzene, and carbolic acid. The drop in air pollution as compared with 1994 is the result of decreased pollution by industrial enterprises.

Ukraine's water sites are polluted predominantly by nitrogen compounds, oil products, and heavy metals. The levels of these pollutants at certain water sites exceeded the level of high pollution.

According to hydrological indicators, none of the water basins monitored in 1995 were deemed as containing clean water. At 36 water sites, the ecosystems were in a state of ecological tension, and at nine sites there was evidence of ecological tension with elements of regression.

The radiation level in the country remained stable throughout the year; there was a stable tendency towards reduced levels of radionuclides in aerosols and precipitation; acceptable concentrations in drinking water were not exceeded.

There were 3,400 forest fires, or one-half as many as in 1994. Fires swept over 3,100 hectares of forested lands, causing 145,000 cubic meters of standing timber to be burned or damaged and 2,000 cubic meters of processed timber.

Forestry losses amounted to 169 trillion karbovantsi, with the cost of putting out fires accounting for nearly one-third of this amount.

As before, the principal cause of fires (95 percent) was public disregard for forest safety regulations and fire-prevention measures. To compensate the losses suffered by forestry, 80 million karbovantsi was collected from those responsible for breaking regulations, as well as 490 million karbovantsi in fines for fire safety violations in the country's forests.

THE CRIMINOGENIC SITUATION

The criminogenic situation continued to worsen. The number of crimes recorded by internal affairs agencies increased 12.2 percent as compared with 1994 and totalled 642,000, of which 41.7 percent were grave crimes.

Crimes of a mercenary nature continued to predominate. Larceny, theft, robbery, and fraud accounted for nearly two-thirds of all crimes. There was a rise in the number of criminal attempts on the life of citizens: The number of premeditated murders increased 4.6 percent and totalled 4,800.

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Alcohol-related crimes are rising: 72,300 crimes were committed by persons in a state of intoxication, or 11.7 percent more than in 1994.

Group crimes are continuing to increase. The number of crimes committed on the territory of Ukraine by groups of individuals increased 10.5 percent and numbered 81,800. There were 440 criminal attempts against facilities used for the centralized storage of money and valuables (in 1994—333 cases), of which 88 percent were directed against the cashier's offices of enterprises and organizations and the remainder against banks and communications offices.

Detected violations of regulations governing foreign currency operations increased 2.5-fold; the number of instances of illegal trading activity that were uncovered increased 1.7-fold; there were 48.8 percent more instances of forging or circulating forged currency and securities.

The number of thefts of state or collective property through misappropriation, embezzlement, or abuse of office on a large and especially large scale nearly doubled.

Of the total number of persons who were found to have committed a crime, 281,600, or 82.7 percent, were prosecuted on criminal charges.

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Belarus

Belarus: Leadership Supports Unification With Russia

WS2003083196 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0750 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On March 18, a top level conference took place in the presidential residence with the Supreme Soviet Chairman Syamyon Sharetski, Presidential Administration head Mikhail Myasnikovich, Security Council State Secretary Viktar Sheyman, members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, deputy prime ministers, and officials of the Presidential Administration in attendance.

According to official sources, during the conference questions concerning Belarusian-Russian integration, in particular, the concept of an agreement on the formation of a Belarusian-Russian union, which the presidents of Belarus and Russia intend to sign in late March or in early April.

President Alyaksandr Lukashenka pointed out that the decision of the Russian State Duma gave an opportunity to speed up the process of integration between Belarus and Russia, which, according to the president, is "the dictates of the times." The head of the state recommended the Supreme Soviet to immediately consider the question of integration intensification in the context of the State Duma's decision. If the Supreme Soviet includes this matter on the agenda of the plenary session, the president expressed his readiness to attend a relevant parliamentary sitting.

According to a participant in the conference, Alyaksandr Lukashenka advised the Supreme Soviet to raise the status of its decision on the denouncement of the Byelavezhskaya Pushcha agreements to the level of a law.

The Supreme Soviet's attitude toward the president's proposal will become known soon. The Supreme Soviet resumes its plenary sittings on March 20. It is most likely that integration with Russia will be the first to be discussed. In the opinion of Supreme Soviet Deputy Chairman Henadz Karpenka, if the denouncement of the Byelavezhskaya Pushcha agreements is put to a vote, there is no doubt that it will receive a majority of 'for' votes.

MP Valeryy Shchukin, a member of the communist faction, said during the conference that his faction would support the Russian State Duma's decision and added that the question of the restoration of the Soviet Union would in fact be decided "neither in Moscow nor Minsk, but in Washington."

The presidential idea on the intensification of Belarusian-Russian integration met with support among virtually all participants of the conference. Only Henadz Karpenka and Deputy Prime Minister Leanid Sinitsyn expressed the thought that there is no need for Belarus to rush to action, and that all would-be consequences of such a step should be reconsidered again and again.

Belarus: Poll Shows 47 Percent Support Unification With Russia

WS2003090896 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0750 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELAPAN's sociological service 'Zerkalo'(Mirror) conducted a public opinion poll of 600 residents of Minsk from 15 to 17 March. Representatives of different social and demographic groups were requested to answer the question on their personal attitude towards the would-be unification (integration) of Belarus and Russia.

Forty seven percent of those questioned completely approved of this idea, every fifth respondent (21 percent) — partially. 20 percent spoke against the unification of Belarus and Russia. The other respondents refrained from answering or considered it difficult to answer.

Among those who backed the idea of unification (integration) of the two countries to either this or that extent, 33 percent spoke in favor of the "complete fusion" as was in Soviet times, 27 percent of the respondents gave their consent to "economic cooperation" between Belarus and Russia. Sixteen percent suggested "political, economic and military integration with the preservation of the state sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus." Every tenth respondent (10 percent) would like to see "political and economic integration with the preservation of state sovereignty." The same number of the respondents who backed the idea of unity of the two Slavic states considered it difficult to express their opinion on the proposed versions of such unity.

Belarus: Russia Pact on Minsk-Brest-Warsaw Highway Made Public

WS2003093496 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0750 GMT 20 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Belarusian Transportation Ministry has made public the text of the Belarusian-Russian interstate agreement on the development of the Moscow-Minsk-Warsaw-Berlin motor highway in its Minsk-Brest-Warsaw section, which was signed on February 27 in Moscow during the visit of the Belarusian government delegation led by President Alyaksandr Lukashenka. The agreement stipulates the

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improvement of transport relations between the two states and the international transit communication in this direction. The parties pledge to exchange information about the maintenance, repair, and reconstruction of the highway; data about the technical level and the conditions of the road and prospects for its development, and information about cargo conveyance, peculiarities of exploitation, and environmental matters.

The agreement addresses questions concerning the attraction of investments, the establishment of joint ventures, and equal participation of Belarusian and Russian contractors in tenders for the construction and development of the road. In the Minsk-Brest-Warsaw section, the highway, which will be a complex system of engineering construction, access roads, border passages, motor service stations, and technical facilities for securing traffic safety, promises to become a highway on a level with the highest European standards.

Belarus: Belarus' Authoritarian Dictatorship Criticized

MM1903140996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 96 p 4

[Article under the "Opinion" rubric by Vasil Bykov: "Belarus Is a Victim of Its Own Lack of Discernment but Russia Could Lose Its Way Too"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems that everything in Russia is now dependent on the elections. It is often the case that at moments like this the most varied factors, including speculative ones, come into play when the political image of the parties unexpectedly changes — the democrats begin to act the role of national radicals whereas the diehard supporters of a strong state suddenly acquire the image of liberals. However, there is nothing they will not do in their irrepressible desire to install their man on the "czar's throne."

In Belarus the problem of "rule" was resolved a year ago. The man who came to power is from the grass roots police-agrarian nomenklatura with a loudly proclaimed aim of eradicating crime and establishing "order." This magical word "order" worked perfectly especially given that no one yet knows for certain what it actually means.

If you leave aside the frankly demagogic incantations and judge exclusively according to the realities of the past 18 months, you might conclude that "order" has largely been achieved. The economy has been razed almost to the ground and most plants have come to a halt. The kolkhoz-sovkhoz system, which has been almost untouched by the reforms, will be in a state of collapse by the end of the summer, economists predict, just like the frenziedly transformed banking-financial system. The privatization of economic installations has stopped (except for the privatization of real estate which the presidential "hierarchy" is carrying out for its own selfish ends). National culture is in its death throes, an unbridled campaign has been mounted against the remnants of the national language, and the historical symbols of Belarus have been abolished.

A wave of crime in its most sophisticated forms is sweeping through the cities and villages of Belarus which has been transformed by the scrapping of the customs barriers into a thoroughfare between mafia structures in the East and the West. The huge and ever-increasing police apparatus sees its main task in backing up the head of state's authoritarian power. This applies to the courts and the Prosecutor's Office which follow the criminal of the spoken and printed word to his home address and with incredible zeal track down authors of literary apocrypha. The television service in the republic has switched to the transmission of the president's daily perorations, as have the official newspapers. The theaters, obliging writers, and creators of artistic biographies of the president are becoming "presidential." Special presidential grants have been set up for particularly diligent young people who have distinguished themselves in special services work.

The republic's citizens have been virtually deprived of the elementary human rights. The Constitution is becoming a fig leaf to hide the authorities' tyranny and lawlessness. As I am writing these lines the Constitutional Court — the last guarantor of the Constitution — finds itself threatened with dissolution just as the president's special purpose police forcibly dispersed the parliamentary opposition last year.

State structures at all levels are staffed with colonels and generals from the former Soviet Army. Peace-loving Belarus is displaying increasingly clearly the hallmarks of a Latin America-style police dictatorship accompanied by the complete militarization of power, complete disregard for the trade unions, and government by means of the president's edicts. The president is showing an increasingly clear demagogic devotion to nationwide referendums and nationwide elections which have proved to be an extremely appropriate quasi-democratic means of seizing and retaining power. (Incidentally, this phenomenon has been well-known since the days of Hitler's Germany but has not been properly assessed by contemporary political analysts. However, it has been duly assessed by the dictatorship).

It has long been well known that the leader and the crowd in their uncontrollable craving for a mystical archetype of order always set out along the road to heaven but invariably arrive at the gates of hell. An aberration of historical sight prevents them from

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discerning the secret of this ancient phenomenon so as to avoid its sorry consequences. In this sense Belarus is once more a victim of its own lack of discernment and is now reaping the bitter harvest of that.

The Belarusian Communists, including the national communists, have contributed quite a lot to the achievement of "order Belarus-style." Those same Communists who campaign for the democratization and independence of the republic. Having operated as a united front against national democracy and actively flaunted the bugbear of nationalism, they have succeeded in removing the democratic opposition from the parliamentary arena and seem to have achieved their aim. But to universal surprise the genie nurtured by their ministrations has escaped from the bottle and is out of control. Even though the republic's Supreme Soviet, with its traditional pro-Communist majority, is offering the dictatorship feeble resistance, no one knows whether this resistance will be maintained for long. As the powers become increasingly authoritarian the legislature risks being transformed into a servile appendage of the dictatorship when a graveyard-like atmosphere of unity and accord really does reign between the branches of power. In such a situation the question now occupying a certain section of political analysts disappears by itself. Namely, who will be first to deliver the decisive blow in the confrontation now existing between the powers — the parliament or the president? I think that in conditions of dictatorship there can be only one answer: The dictator will strike first.

Moldova

Moldova: GASPROM To 'Rebill' Country's Gas Debt as 'State Credit'

AU2003095496 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1523 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Russian Gasprom concern is ready to rebill Moldova's gas debt into a state credit, INFOTAG was told by Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister Valentin Kunev who is in charge of the national energy complex in the government. According to him, such an agreement has been reached during the visit of a Gasprom delegation to Chisinau in early March.

Theoretically, the government could collect the money to repay the debt by raising the existing tariffs. However, that would be unfair towards those consumers who pay for gas promptly, the deputy premier said.

The debt rebilling into a state credit promises a series of advantages to Moldova. "Firstly, these are fines which are imposed in amounts considerably higher than a credit interest rate," he explained. This means that additional expenditures for payment arrears will be reduced substantially.

According to Kunev, Moscow is ready to grant a kind of a "repayment vacations" for two years to Chisinau.

However, the chief advantage is that the credit refunding will be extended for 7-10 years, and the responsibility for a prompt credit repayment shall be on the Moldovan Government and budget.

The government admits that such a rebilling is being actively opposed by the International Monetary Fund [IMF], and the IMF has serious reasons for acting so: the debt (which is $280 million according to Chisinau, and $330 million as being claimed by Moscow) if it is turned into a credit, will be an additional heavy burden on the State Budget.

Valentin Kunev does not rule out one more variant — a possible transfer of a portion of Moldovan enterprises' shares to Gasprom, sales of property, or commodity crediting of agrarian farms which supply foodstuffs to extreme north regions in Russia.

Moldova: Fired Defense Minister Barred From Ministry

LD1903154696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1526 GMT 19 Mar 96

[By Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, March 19 (Itar-Tass) — Pavel Creanga, Moldavian Defence Minister, sacked by President Mircea Snegur, was barred from the ministry on Tuesday.

The orders to this effect were given by General Tudor Dabija, acting defence minister, appointed temporarily by the President, officer-on-duty in the reception room of the Defence Ministry told Itar-Tass.

He said that Creanga was barred from the ministry for the reason that he was accompanied by TV reporters. The officer-on-duty said that the normal situation exists in the army.

Creanga believes that there may be an outbreak of indignation among officers who regard his dismissal unconstitutional.

The parliament and the Moldavian government reached a compromise decision to send an interpellation to the Constitutional Court whether or not the presidential decree is legitimate.

Pending the court's decision, two defence ministers now occupy places in the Moldavian army — the sacked

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Pavel Creanga and the temporarily appointed Tudor Dabija.

"The Constitutional Court is studying the address of a group of deputies and the Moldavian government about the legality of the President's decree regarding the dismissal of the Defence Minister," Nicolae Osmocescu, member of the Constitutional Court, told Itar-Tass.

"It will be decided whether or not the interpellation is adopted and then the date of the court meeting will be fixed."

Moldova: Former Defense Minister on Reasons for Dismissal

LD1903230796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2002 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU, Mar 19 (Interfax) — Division General Pavel Creanga, sacked as Moldovan defense minister by a March 15 presidential decree, told Interfax Tuesday [19 March] that his resignation owes to the fact that from the beginning of the creation of the Moldovan armed forces he "maintained neutrality and tried to prevent the army from being drawn into politics."

According to Creanga, he was sacked because a certain state institution wants "to have a loyal defense minister."

He said the ministry is currently headed by the Commander and Chief, President Mircea Snegur, while Acting Defense Minister Brigadier General Tudor Dabija is in charge of operative issues.

Creanga said he feels support from officers of the Defense Ministry staff and is still awaiting a Constitutional Court verdict on the legality of his sacking.

He confirmed reports that his office phone and other lines of communication had been cut off in the first days after the decree on his resignation was signed.

He also said that today he was not allowed to enter the premises of the Defense Ministry where he was heading accompanied by a group of journalists.

The Defense Ministry confirmed the information.

Moldova: PSDM Sees Creanga's Dismissal as Constitution Violation

AU2003081896 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, March 18 (INFOTAG) — The chairman of the Social Democratic Party [PSDM], Anatol Taranu, believes that by having signed the defense minister dismissal decree President Snegur has violated certain provisions of the Constitution.

Speaking at today's press conference, Mr. Taranu underlined that, still, a final decision is to be taken by the Constitutional Court.

"The presidential entourage are creating unfavorable conditions to their boss. Surprisingly enough, but Snegur was the first to have announced his intention to run for presidency. Largely because of his entourage, the President often takes unprofessional decisions, without a preliminary scrutiny of their possible consequences," Taranu said.

"I have an impression that Mr. Lucinschi is obtaining his political dividends in bulk. He should thank Snegur's advisers, who organize all that, for such a happy opportunity," the PSDM leader remarked.

Party representatives pointed out at the press conference that the current Constitution has lots of drawbacks. However, it should be respected and fulfilled by everybody.

This Constitution is a transitional document, e.g., it does not give a clear idea what kind of republic Moldova is — presidential or parliamentary, Taranu said. The next Parliament will have to upgrade it so that it had a strict definition of all power structures' functions. Taranu himself is a supporter of a powerful presidential republic.

He welcomed a possible simultaneous holding of early parliamentary and presidential elections. "The sooner the current Parliament goes into history, the better: it had fulfilled its historic mission," the party leader said.

He does not rule out the PSDM's possible alliance with other political forces, including with communists, at the forthcoming elections, but emphasized that everything will depend on the alliance's platform. "But there will be no compromises at the expense of our own program," Taranu said.

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Foreign Minister Meets With Russian Deputy Premier

LD1903221496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, March 19 (Interfax) — A close cooperation among Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus will speed up integration processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States, Deputy Russian Prime Minister Aleksey Bolshakov told a news conference in Almaty on Tuesday.

He arrived in the Kazakh capital yesterday and held talks with Kazakh Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin.

Qazhygeldin, who also took part in the news conference, expressed confidence that "the CIS will be rather stable and large."

According to him, Russia and Kazakhstan "are very close to each other, their economies are intertwined." Both countries have "one way to follow which is demanded by our peoples and our common past" — to revitalize the common commodity market, said Bolshakov.

He said that concrete decisions are needed "to finally form a single economic space." Firstly, a legislative basis should be created for drawing closer the conditions of work of commodity producers. Bolshakov called these top-priority tasks in 1996.

On the same day the government delegations of Russia and Kazakhstan held talks in Almaty which were chaired by Bolshakov and First Deputy Kazakh Prime Minister Nygmetzhan Yesengharin.

Yesengharin has told Interfax that both sides discussed long-term prospects for the customs union, as well as the tasks to be accomplished to put to another level integration processes in the economic and humanitarian spheres in the run up to the signing late in March of a document on deeper integration.

The negotiators also discussed the creation of an electric power union, as well as the prospecting, production and transportation of Kazakh oil via Russia.

According to Yesengharin, the two sides discussed a joint project on TV and radio broadcasting, and an agreement of leasing by Russia of military test grounds on the territory of Kazakhstan. The documents are expected to be prepared for the signing by the Russian and Kazakh prime ministers in April.

Kazakhstan: Premier Sees Accelerated Integration With Russia, Belarus

LD1903222196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 19 Mar 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 53 (1046) compiled by Anna Kovalyova, Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovsky, Boris Yunanov)]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus would accelerate integration processes in the CIS framework, Prime Minister Akezhan Qazhygeldin believes.

Qazhygeldin said at a briefing held in Almaty Tuesday following talks with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Bolshakov Qazhygeldin, that he is sure the Commonwealth of Independent States will be fairly strong and large.

On the other hand, somebody has to take on more responsibility in the integration process, he said. According to Qazhygeldin, Russia and Kazakhstan are very close, their economies are closely intertwined.

For his part, Bolshakov said that Russia and Kazakhstan will restore a common commodity market, as the two peoples want and the common past dictates.

Concrete decisions must be made to form a common economic space, he said. A legal framework has to be created in 1996 for making the economic environments for producers similar in the two countries.

Also Thursday, government delegations headed by Bolshakov and Kazakh First Deputy Prime Minister Nyghmetzhan Yesengharin held talks.

Yesengharin told Interfax that the two sides discussed the outlook for a Customs Union and ways to step up the integration processes in the economic and humanitarian fields in anticipation of the signing of comprehensive documents by the heads of state at the end of March. Other issues discussed in the talks were the setting up of an energy union, oil prospecting and production and transportation of Kazakh oil across Russia and numerous others.

According to Yesengharin, the two sides discussed a package of 10 documents, in particular on television and radio broadcasting and an agreement on Russia renting military testing grounds in Kazakhstan. Yesengharin believes that these agreements will bring the two countries closer together. They are expected to be signed by the Kazakh and Russian prime ministers next April.

Yesengharin emphasized that the integration of Russia and Kazakhstan is a natural process. He said that

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intensive work is under way to bring the legislations of the two countries closer together.

"I don't think that Russia or Belarus or Kazakhstan are prepared to have the integration process culminate in a confederation," Yesengharin said. At this stage this would be an artificial and imposed arrangement to which Almaty will never agree, he said. The integration should proceed in a natural way dictated by objective laws under which society and state develop.

Yesengharin emphasized the integrating nature of the Kazakh policy. He reminded the journalists that Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev took the initiative in the setting up of a Eurasian Union and a Customs Union with Russia and made a significant contribution to the formation of a common economic space in the CIS.

Yesengharin categorically rejected the possibility of restoring a totalitarian USSR. The denouncement of the Belovezh agreements by the Russian State Duma "has nothing to do with the integration processes" and is "a political stunt leading nowhere."

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Armenia

Armenia: Turkmen, Armenian Presidents Condemn Duma, Support Yeltsin

NC1903212796 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 19 Mar 96

[Joint statement by Turkmenistan President Niyazov and Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan issued in Yerevan on 19 March — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Having examined the decision of the Russian State Duma of 15 March on revoking the 1991 Belovezh Agreement, the presidents of Turkmenistan and Armenia feel it is directed at the sovereignty of the CIS countries.

Expressing the Turkmen and Armenian peoples' will, which has been confirmed by national referendums and which reflects their firm determination to follow the course of independent and sovereign development;

Affirming Turkmenistan's and Armenia's independent status, which is recognized by the international community and which cannot be the subject to examination by any other country or by any of its organs;

Considering the Duma's decision as a blatant attempt at ideological revanchism;

The presidents of Turkmenistan and Armenia declare that they will follow the chosen course of independence as provided for in the UN Charter and by established international norms. And by affirming their states' readiness to participate in the process of cooperation within the CIS framework on the bases of equality and mutual respect, they defend Russian President Boris Yeltsin's position on this issue.

Armenia: German Bundestag Vice Chairman Summarizes Results of Visit

NC1903154996 Yerevan SNARK in English 0727 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, March 19 (SNARK) — Hans Klein, Vice Chairman of Bundestag, Germany, stated at yesterday's press conference that the Karabakh conflicting sides are to come to a compromise in the negotiations on settling the conflict.

According to him, talks being currently held on different levels, are lasting too long. He noted the following primary principals to be kept in order to reach any result:

— corridor connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia;
— guarantees for NKR [Nagorno-Karabakh Republic] security;
— security guarantees for Azerbaijan

According to Klein, Germany will do its utmost to find a solution to the problem which will threaten neither the security of NKR population nor its political independence.

National Assembly's Vice Chairman Ara Sahakyan noted that Nagorno-Karabakh is struggling for its self-determination and Armenia has always supported and will never stop supporting Karabakh. NKR has its own authorities and Parliament, Sahakyan said adding that the conflict should be by all means settled peacefully. Sahakyan stressed the importance of the Minsk OSCE group in the settlement process.

The German delegation concluded its three-day official visit to Armenia by this press conference. The delegation left Armenia for Kyrgyzstan.

Armenia: Russian Special Envoy Kazimirov Arrives in Karabakh

NC1903183096 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 0959 GMT 19 Mar 96

["Stepanakert Does Not Change Its Position"— ARAGIL headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("LRAGIR OR" daily-PAST), 03/19/96 — Russian Special Envoy in the negotiations for resolution of the Karabakh Conflict Vladimir Kazimirov arrived in Stepanakert on 17 March.

Negotiations have been held in the RMK [Republic of Mountainous Karabakh] Foreign Ministry in the afternoon. RMK Foreign Minister Arkadi Ghukasyan stressed that resolution of the Karabakh conflict should be based on the following principles: first, absence of subordination of one side of the conflict to another; second, territorially separated existence of the republic is not possible; and third, security of RMK should be defined by the people of Karabakh.

Mr. Kazimirov, in turn, stressed Russia's interest and readiness to take efforts in the direction of signing documents, to bring an end to the conflict.

RMK President Robert Kocharyan met Russian Special Envoy in the evening of the same day. Kazimirov returned to Yerevan on 18 March, he will leave for Baku today.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Receives U.S. Delegation

NC1503143096 Baku TURAN in English 0854 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/14.03.96/TURAN — Last evening President Aliyev received a high-ranking

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American delegation led by the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, and Deputy National Security Advisor, Samuel Berger.

"We highly appreciate our cooperation with the U.S., especially in the oil field, we have achieved success in this sphere. Moreover, we conduct regular consultations with the U.S. on the issues related to establishment of stability and peace in Transcaucasus", President Aliyev said welcoming the guests.

He noted several days ago he received the letter from President Clinton, in which he has expressed his opinion towards several important issues. "I agree with the opinions expressed in President Clinton's letter", President Aliyev mentioned.

Samuel Berger said that President Bill Clinton asked the members of the delegation to pay visit to the region. "The U.S. is interested in strengthening of independence of countries of Transcaucasus and establishment of stability and peace here", Mr. Berger said.

He has expressed satisfaction with deepening cooperation in the field of oil production on the Caspian between the U.S. and Azerbaijan. Mr. Berger also said today he had meetings in the SOCAR [State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic] and AIOC [Azerbaijan International Operating Company]. "The achievements of Azerbaijan in this field are significant", he noted. Mr. Berger congratulated President Aliyev on conclusion of agreement on shipment of early Caspian oil through Georgia with Georgia.

"Today I have also met with the refugees and I think that we must make more efforts to provide them support", Mr. Berger mentioned.

Strobe Talbott said "President Clinton wishes strengthening of independence of the countries of Transcaucasus, their prosperity and establishment of peace in the region. President attaches great signficance to this visit and the authoritative staff of our delegation is accounted for that". [sentence as received]

He said the American delegation includes high qualified experts in different fields, who must participate in discussion of key issues. Mr. Talbott has expressed hope that the negotiations with the Azerbaijani Government will bring results. Then the meeting continued behind the closed doors.

The American delegation also includes the representative of the U.S. Department of State in the Minsk Group, Joseph Presel, Senior Advisor of the U.S. Department of State for the New Independent States, James Collins, and others.

Azerbaijan: Gasanov Comments on Talks With U.S. Delegation

NC1503150496 Baku TURAN in English 0854 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/14.03.96/TURAN—The prospects for bilateral relations in field of policy and economy, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict as well as other issues of mutual interest are the focus of attention of negotiations between the delegation of the U.S. Department of State and the Azerbaijani Government, which started last evening in Baku, Azerbaijan's Foreign Affairs Minister, Gasan Gasanov, told TURAN's correspondent.

"The prospects for development of the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, the role of the U.S. in settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and the prospects for activization of American business circles in Azerbaijan are under discussion", Minister Gasanov noted.

Asked whether the U.S. and Russia compete with each other in struggle for strengthening of their positions in Azerbaijan through mediation of the conflict, Gasan Gasanov said: "It does not disturb us, the most important thing for us is settlement of the problem".

Azerbaijan: Turkmen, Azerbaijani Presidents Condemn Duma Decision

LD1803183596 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 18 Mar 96

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov arrived on an official visit in Baku today. The two adjacent states have much in common, as the economies of both are driven by oil and gas industries. Therefore, the official talks between the two countries' delegations focused on interaction in that sphere. The status of the Caspian Sea was not discussed, although it is known that each side has its own view on the subject.

[Unidentified correspondent, over video of news conference] Geydar Aliyev and Saparmurad Niyazov agreed to expand shipping between the two countries and to increase Turkmen fuel oil supplies to Azerbaijan. The presidents also reached an agreement under which the experts will work on a project for Turkmenistan to be able to export fuel to world markets via Azerbaijan and Georgia. A package of agreements and a friendship and cooperation treaty were signed. At a news conference, the heads of the two states have given a very negative appraisal to the State Duma's decision revoking the Belovezh Agreements.

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[Begin recording] [Niyazov, in Russian] On 27 October 1991, Turkmenistan held a referendum on its independence. On that day the people expressed their will and adopted a decision that is not subject to change. A day of national independence was declared on 27 October.

[Aliyev, in Russian] Attempts to revoke the Belovezh Agreements, which are believed to have allegedly led to the disintegration of the USSR, are futile. The point does not lie in the Belovezh Agreements. They just registered the fact of the USSR's disintegration. It was already disintegrating. Then the USSR's supreme organ of power, the Supreme Soviet, adopted a decision on the dissolution of the USSR. Therefore, attempts to return to that issue are absolutely pointless and useless. [end recording]

Azerbaijan: Aliyev, Niyazov Criticize Russian Duma Decision on CIS

LD1903163696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1426 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, March 19 (Interfax) — Azeri President Heydar Aliyev and President Saparmurad Niyazov of Turkmenistan have declared their desire to continue strengthening national statehood, and to create necessary conditions to ensure the political and economic sovereignty of their countries.

They spoke negatively in a joint statement signed on Tuesday in Baku airport before Niyazov's departure from Baku about the Russian State Duma's decision denouncing the Belovezh Accords, which were the basis for the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. "The independent status of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan was recognized by the world community and cannot be considered by any individual state or its body," says the statement.

Aliyev and Niyazov confirmed the readiness of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to develop cooperation among the CIS countries "on the basis of equality, mutual respect and cooperation among the CIS peoples."

On Tuesday Niyazov arrived in the Armenian capital of Yerevan.

Azerbaijan: Baku May Help Develop Turkmen Oil, Gas Fields

LD1803224596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1856 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, March 18 (PIA-Interfax) — Turkmenistan does not deny the possibility of Azerbaijan's participation in the exploration and development of promising oil and gas structures in the Turkmen sector of the Caspian Sea, Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov said at a news conference in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, Monday.

Niyazov is now paying an official visit to the Trans-Caucasus.

"We intend to continue the present conversation about possible joint projects for the development of Turkmen offshore fields," Niyazov said.

"Turkmenistan is open for cooperation in the oil and gas sector," Niyazov said, adding that besides Azerbaijan talks on the development of the Caspian offshore fields were now being conducted with Russia's Gazprom concern and several U.S. and European companies.

Niyazov said that during his Monday talks with Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev, Azerbaijan was reassured of Turkmenistan's support for projects implemented by Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea with the participation of foreign oil companies.

Niyazov said Turkmenistan did not discount the possibility of its participation in the project for transporting "early oil" from Azerbaijani offshore fields via Georgian territory. "We support the agreement on the early oil transportation that Azerbaijan has signed with Russia and Georgia," he said. "If we decide that this is economically profitable for us, we will also take part," Niyazov said.

During its coming visits to Armenia and Georgia the Turkmen delegation plans to discuss problems regarding the functioning of the gas pipeline going via these countries, Niyazov said.

Turkmenistan and Russia are now the Trans-Caucasus' key natural gas suppliers. In particular, Georgia annually buys about 1 billion cubic meters of Turkmen natural gas, which accounts for about 50 percent of Georgia's annual gas consumption. Georgia currently owes about $500 million for Turkmen gas supplies.

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1856 GMT on 18 March in a Baku dateline item transmits the following: "Turkmenistan believes that there must be different routes available for the transit of Central Asian oil," Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov said at a news conference in Baku at the end of his visit to Azerbaijan.

Turkmenistan is considering five routes. In addition to the conventional ones, across the Caucasus or Russia into Europe, one option is to pump Turkmen gas across Afghanistan to Pakistan and to the Indian Ocean, he said.

Niyazov also said that Ashgabat supports the agreement Baku signed with Moscow and Tbilisi on the delivery of

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early oil from Azerbaijani offshore fields across Russia and Georgia.

The $7.5 billion contract on the operation of the Azerbaijani offshore fields of Azeri, Chirag and Gyuneshli that Baku signed with an international consortium which incorporates Russia's Lukoil does not harm Turkmenistan, he believes. Niyazov does not think that lack of agreement on the use of the Caspian Sea should handicap work on the contract. The Russian official view is that work should not start before the status of the sea has been agreed on.

Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan have differences over the Caspian sea, Niyazov said.

Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev said at the news conference that the positions of the two countries on the Caspian Sea are identical or related.

The two leaders agreed that consultations on the problem should be continued and a consensus could be achieved."]

Azerbaijan: Turkmen Minister on 'Status' of Caspian Sea

NC1903222296 TURAN in English
1333 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/19.03.96/TURAN — "The position of the President Niyazov on the question of the status of the Caspian is that this sea should unite people living at its coasts," TURAN was told by the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Boris Shikhmuradov.

"It is necessary to work out such status which would meet interests of each country," the Minister said. Boris Shikhmuradov noted that according Turkmenistan treats this question as nor simple. [sentence as received] "The President noted that they should not hurry in working out the status of the Caspian. They should work and work so that the resolution of the question on the status of the Caspian to be natural," the Minister said. He said, the document which is to be signed should allow each country to be realised as the Caspian state."

According to Boris Shikhmuradov their relations with Armenian have been developing within three-sided co-operation Turkmenistan-Iran-Armenia. "This three-sided form of co-operation has been existing in Turkmenistan for two years. It would ease resolution of mutual calculations between the countries," he said.

The Minister noted that Ashgabat is participating in other "triangles" too: Turkmenistan-Iran-Ukraine, Turkmenistan-Iran-India and so on. According to Minister such form is convenient for mutual deliveries of goods and so on.

"We always note, triangle, three-sided diplomacy can not acquire the form of square and so on. We are ready that new partners will join this co-operation. That is why we appreciate joining of Azerbaijan," Boris Shikhmuradov said.

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